

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

OR

OUR INDIA

AUGUST 15TH 1947

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY
FOOD CLOTHING AND SHELTER.
MAHATMA GANDHI
NATION-BUILDING
THIS OUR HINDUSTAN

BY
ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

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By the same Author

THE HERO OF HINDUSTAN

THE POET OF HINDUSTAN

THE PSALMS OF LOVE DIVINE (in the Press)

SONGS OF A SOLITARY SAILOR etc.

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DEDICATION

Queen among celestial nymphs, Mother of God and grace divine,
Vedantic India that stood the test of times in ages past,
At the Holy of Holies of your sacred heart there still shine
Those stars which lit up the richest pearls of Mankind bright
In the dark world of positivistic statistics and pragmatism cold
In soulless machine lost and to time-space-bound life sold.
Of this bunch of roses the flowers are yours, thorns are mine ;
In this field of corns, wheat and grapes are yours, chaff alone mine.
But accept this widow's mite, India dear, my Mother, Sweetheart,
Deign to receive this humble offering I raise to you ere I part
From this Life's solemn main, sailing on to the Yonder Shore
Where Existence is fulfilled, Truth-vision gained, with sighs and
tears no more.

Bless and consecrate this new, young and free India of ours
On the altar of that Ideal Hind, Mother, Father, Perennial Source
Of Universal Humanity, Catholic Man, the Eternal, the Divine,
Born of your incandescent love, virgin purity, truth sublime.
Make us your children, every son and daughter, of this Aryavarta,
Heralds of Freedom, Purity, Heroism, Love in Bharatvarsha.
Arouse, awake, the Lion of Divinity asleep in you, in you,
My sister, my brother, born of the race-stock of the rishis bold.
Arise, awake from lethargy, scepticism, indolence, indifference,
And shoulder God's burden, respond to the Motherland's new call,
Propped up on Wisdom's wings which from Saraswati alight, descend,
And assert anew the Mother's ancient, youthful, immortal soul.
Unite the Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsees, Sikhs and Jains,
Unite East and West, Russia and America, the Whites,
Browns and Blacks,
In one bond of Humanity, beyond which there neither God nor
religion is.
Unite us all in Humanity, baptise us all in thy Holy Spirit divine, one
Bestowing us second birth in enlightenment, virginity and full freedom
Transplanting us all anew into the empyreal skies where lies hidden
the keys of thy Kingdom

PREFACE

This book owes its birth to the inspiration I received on August 15th 1947, the Indian Independence Day. Many important events have taken place in our country since then which freeze poetic inspiration and bring us to grips with the hardest economico-political problems of the day. Nevertheless, I have completed the vision of India in this book with the same spirit of idealism and dreams as in my previous Hindustan series of books. The picture I had in my mind when I wrote the Hero and the Poet is completed in the present volume. After seeing various reviews and criticisms that grew around the first two books I felt it my duty to make it clear that the three Hindustan books are literary creations, though I had made use of historical and fictitious names as vehicles to convey India's ideals and my dreams. It is just a literary device and a creative technique which should not be identified with historical facts and verbatim quotations from historical figures like Subhas Chandra Bose and Rabindranath Tagore. In fact there is so little of historical Subhas in the Hero and still less of Rabindranath in the Poet of Hindustan. This third book, however, is more factual, as the reader will understand as he or she goes through it.

The burden of these three books,—the groundwork for something more useful to be done in obedience to Truth-God, the call of my County—Humanity, is to clothe spiritual, moral and aesthetic truths under historical and fictitious names, to show that the purpose of human existence is realisation of Truth, Love and Beauty and Service of Mankind in various fields of life. I believe I am doing my vocational Duty hereby. The results will take care of themselves.

This time no attempt is made to secure foreword from any big guns, partly because the literary baby is out of its swaddling cloths and partly because I feel the intrinsic merit of the writing alone should recommend or condemn the book and not the sugar-coated appreciation or unfair criticism of any man on earth.

But I know Gandiji's hands invisibly bless me, as Bapu said he would write a foreword for this book before he left for our Heavenly Home.

ANTHONY ELENJIMITTAM

111, Russa Road
Calcutta—26.
15th August, 1949.

PUBLISHERS' NOTE

We have much pleasure to bring to light the third of the Hindustan series of books by Sri Anthony Elenjimittam, who no longer needs any introduction to the reading public in India. In less than three years after his return from Europe (where he spent ever a decade as a scholar, preacher and social worker), the author has already established himself as an accomplished editor, a writer of repute, a speaker, social worker and journalist. Encouraged by the success of the HERO OF HINDUSTAN published by us in 1947 and the POET OF HINDUSTAN published in 1948, we are launching the HINDUSTAN HAMARA into the life-stream to run its course on this day, August 15th 1949, the second anniversary of our political independence, a prelude to the much-needed economic *swaraj*, without which this important date in Indian history loses its significance.

Besides the alphabetical index—so rare in Indian publications but so much highly appreciated abroad, as the book reviews made in France, America and England reveal—the author has this time enriched the book by appending a short glossary of the foreign words and phrases used in this book, which will be helpful to the foreign readers.

The Orient Book Company was born in the birthpangs of nationalist struggle and intends to continue the path it has chalked out for itself, viz., to produce creative, nationalistic and humanistic literature based on world-culture, human solidarity and world-state ideal in English and vernaculars. In the uphill march of nation-building, creative literature, born of creative thinking and enlightened love, is as much needed as the economic development and material uplift of the country. We have the privilege to contribute our share on the literary front of our nation-building task. We are grateful to the cooperation and practical suggestions received from the public, from our sympathizers and friends and specially from our distinguished authors, among whom the writer of this book is among the cherished names in our list and among the English-reading public in India. We hope we will receive in future also the same help, sympathy and cooperation from our readers as ever before.

PRAHLAD KUMAR PRAMANIK

9 Shyma Charan De Street,
Calcutta—12.
15th August 1949.

HINDUSTAN HAMARA

CHAPTER I.

AUGUST 15th., 1947

The bells tolled the dawn of a new era ; the Congress Tricolour heralded the advent of a new age ; the Heavens proclaimed the birth of a New India, when, at the historic Midnight Session in New Delhi, the Constituent Assembly took over power from the British and assumed full responsibilities for the governance of India.

History never repeats itself. The history of the British quitting India is unique, as the very history of the Indian struggle that compelled the British to leave our shores is likewise unique. These great events of the twentieth century are still fresh, still too vivid and too hot in our memory, too deeply engraved in our hearts, that we may not be able to evaluate them in their right perspective. In some respects, perhaps the posterity will see and judge these great historical events more objectively and critically than we of the present generation, who are both the architects and spectators of the world destiny in this atomic age.

From the snow-capped virgin cliffs of the mighty Himalayas down to the raging waves of the Cape Comerin, from Afghanistan to the Burmese frontier, throughout the length and breadth of the country, through her hills, dales and planes, through her rivers, seas and bays, there was seen a new breath of Freedom in her cultural, spiritual, social, economic and political life. The glow of Freedom was seen everywhere, even when fire and blood, killing and plundering, raged in the walled city of Lahore and the golden city of Amritsar. North West Frontier was then silent, but a silence that preceeded the storm, inspite of the glow of Freedom, into whose ever-expanding skies new India was ushering out.

A miracle, literally a miracle, a magical display,—white magic, of course,—was wrought in Calcutta which had continued to be the cauldron of communal poison for full one year. Just on

the eve of the Indian Independence Day the city turned out to be a real centre of Freedom-madness and communal harmony in a way never witnessed before. The old gloom, hate and distrust disappeared instantaneously. The magic wand of Freedom was being waved ; the National Flag was being hoisted in every corner, at the top of every house in Calcutta the premier city of India ; and the old Hindu-Muslim tension eased, ceased, completely.

The little man, the great Mahatma, the architect of Free India, halted in the city, and was partly instrumental in the great Calcutta miracle. There was no miracle in Calcutta ; but Calcutta itself became the great miracle on that historic day, 15th August, 1947. The third party in power was withdrawn and the Hindus and Muslims rediscovered their soul again. The scenes of fraternization, of real, sincere, heart-felt comradeship and friendship witnessed in Calcutta should be transmitted to the posterity in this great Bengal, to the teeming and promising population of the Indian subcontinent.

VANDE MATARAM

Not far away from the junction of the Harrison Road and College Street, a pretty Muslim girl, standing alone under the serene star-lit skies of 15th August, with her angelic face veiled, was singing melodiously :

I have assisted at the birth of New India,
 Have felt the pulse of the Constituent Assembly.
Bande Mataram, Sare Jahanse accha Hindustan hamara,.....
 India you are born today, new, young, great.
 The old India is gone ; the new from the ruins of the old has risen.
 Come ye citizens of this new State ; form a choir ; sing a song.
 This is our land ; our Fatherland ; *Hindustan Hamara*,
 The garden-house of the Most High, whose lilies we are ;
 The royal temple-woods wherein we are the nightingales.
 Rejoice, heart of Hindustan, on this great historical day.
 Gandhiji has achieved the miracle in Calcutta
 When Hindus are embracing the Moslems, the Moslems
 Are embracing the Hindus, and the tension has ceased in no time.
 Humanity is triumphing under the magic spell of Mahatmaji,
 Atom-bomb-makers and cleverest diplomats are now put to shame.

India, my Mother, I adore you—*Vande Mātaram, sūjalām,
suphalām, malaya jāsitalām, mātaram...*

Mother I bow to thee !

*Rich with thy hurrying streams,
Bright with thy orchard gleams,
Cool with thy winds of delight,
Dark fields waving, Mother of might,
Mother free.*

*Glory of moonlight dream,
Over thy branches lordly streams,
Clad in thy blossoming trees,
Mother giver of peace,
Laughing low and sweet !
Mother, I kiss thy feet,
Speaker sweet and low !
Mother, to thee I bow.*

Soul of my soul, heart of my heart,
Graceful Mother, from you let me nev'r part
But serve you all day long,

Throughout life with a celestial song.

Thou art my Mother, Love, Sweetheart,
My poetry in Thee lies for ev'r everywhere.

Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram

Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram

Your tricolour of Freedom is unfurled,,,

Your call throughout the land is heard,

All youthful hearts have been stirred,

The dead weight of thraldom is removed,

Freedom has come, and is in our hearts enthroned.

Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram—India, whose soul-force

Alone made the foreigners quit our shores,

Whose undying wisdom enshrined in our sacred lore,

Has made what you are today, my Mother dear,

Great, catholic, divine, pure.

Mother who suckled in latter days on your breast

Bards, prophets, saints and sages great,

Whose clarion call aroused

The sleeping sons and daughters of Hindustan,

With folded hands I fall and lisp,
Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram.

Still smoulders underneath the ashes,
 That fire that can set anew the land in flames,
 Dynamize all by the awakening of that Lion,
 Who is the Self of all, and strength in us.
 From Cape Comerin up to the Himalayas,
 From Afghauistan to Burma we salute and sing
Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram.

The winter gloom is past,
 The day dawns in the East,
 The smiling daughter of Heaven
 Clad in her nuptial garments,
 The glow of Freedom lits up the whole land,
 Full of promises, opportunities and hopes,
 The day of deliverance is come,
 My India, we salute Thee ! *Vande Mātaram.*

Gandhiji, the little man, Mahatma,
 Sits there in Belliaghatta weaving and praying
 On this most auspicious day,
 Fasting for the sins of communal fiends,
 That disfigured the fair name of India.
 You Panditji, we wish you well,
 Shoulder the new responsibility
 And bring us to the land of our dreams.

Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram,

Hail hail Hindustan,
 God's eternal Ghulistan,
 This land of our birth and love,
Hindustan hamara.
Vande Mātaram—Vande Mātaram.
Hindustan hamara.

INDEPENDENCE

Then a choir of angel-faced, bright-sareed, sweet-smiling girls
 in uniform began to sing :
 Sons and daughters of Hindustan arise,
 Raise your banner, unfurl your tricolour,

In an enthusiastic choir, you boys and girls sing,
 The canticle of Freedom of our immortal Fatherland.
 The foreign yoke is ended ; the last chapter is closed ;
 Now boys and girls ; youth of India, be on your gaurd !
 Many new foes and fiends will come to steal away
 This precious gem of independence and make you fall again.
 Soldiers of Hindustan, be alert, attention, march.
 They who have lacerated India's heart are now gone away ;
 But mind rapacious boars and tigers are wide awake,
 To prey on our Motherland when she is sound asleep.
 Hence arise, up in arms, form battalions, form legions,
 To defend the sacred soil and cultural soul of Hindustan,
 The rich heritage of this vast subcontinent,
 The object of love, adoration, thrilling inspiration to us.
 Let the spirit of those martyrs who have spilt their blood,
 Whose toil, sweat and tears brought us to this auspicious dawn,
 Let the revolutionaries and reformers ; prophets and seers
 Who brought us to this landmark, arise from their silent dust,
 And sing and chant the National Anthem of new India,
 Of this ancient Motherland of our birth and love.
 Let us offer our best gifts at the feet of the Mother Divine,
 And immolate our hearts on the sacred altar of this wonderland.
 Let not the song of freedom cease from the hearts of the citizens
 Of this proud, mighty, catholic and immortal Fatherland.
 Ye poets, give your verses, ye prophets, give your vision,
 Your heart, your living inspiration, you words of eternal life.
 Give, offer, consecrate at the feet of this ancient Mother,
 Yet ever-young, whose cultural roots rest on the secret wisdom

of the Self,
 Of that eternal OM, on that YES, which is Reality, Thought
 and Bliss.

India, to whom I owe, my love, heart and all ;
 Mother who sustained my life from shireck for so long,
 In the midmost ocean wild saved ; and a raft of salvation
 To me has become, I salute you, and proclaim in all solemnity :
 To serve God and Humanity through you I dedicate my life.
 Today I am become one with thy immortal spirit ;
 Your womanhood, in all her *Kali-Dhurga-Saraswati* forms
 Enthralls me. At her altar have I placed my sword.

When youth of India is rejoicing in shouts and games,
 Here I sit alone in my solitary cell to sing the song of Freedom,
 To perpetuate this great landmark in Indian history.
 My India, your ancient divine soul to preserve
 I'll fight ; your freedom, your honour, your greatness
 To enshrine, to enhance. Let your ancient ideals inspire me.
 O let not that cursed day dawn when India will cease to be
 What she has ever been, by getting herself entrapped in the
 trammals of a purely mechanised life.
 Remember, children of the Immortal Bliss, offspring of Hindustan,
 Your mighty past ; remaining on that rock-bottom, forge ahead ;
 Build, construct, enhance. I've seen my vision ; I've sung my song,
 Today has my heart gone beyond the veils of superficialities,
 Has dived deep into the Infinite sea of Life and Love Divine.
 O I have touched, relished, the soul of India on this
 My heart has, at last, beat in unison with the Infinite ;
 I have reached the shores of immortality ; death is no longer for me.
 For this great day to see many have sighed and tried ;
 We reap the fruits of those valient fighters on whose Fortress
 We stand aloft ; we raise the banner of Freedom, the national
 tricolour.

Develop, grow, expand, my India, now, at last, become free ;
 Sound your bugles from the Himalayas to Cape Comerin,
 And march ahead on you ancient way, adapted to the modern spirit.
 Build up, but on your old spirit ; bequeathed by seers,
 Prophets and sages all. Sense the Infinite ; raise your banner,
 In this India of Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Sikhs, Parsees, all.
 India, live ; long live your newly-won Freedom, your eternal Life.

From that happy spot, where the Muslim girl sang the *Vande Mataram* we, a group of young Neo-Hindu idealists, walked towards Rajabazar. The Muslims sprinkled rose water on us every time we went to their quarters. The scenes of fraternization were wildly exuberant. The one year old Hindu-Muslim tension eased, —nay ceased completely. It was a wonderful scene, divine, celestial, inspiring. Ram and Rahim have become one.

At Rajabazar, an old man approached us and said : Hindus or Muslims, all are children of the same soil, Bengal, or India ; all children of the same God, Allah (which means the same *Brahma*, the same *Parabrahma*). *Iswara Allah tere nam.*

Bharata Mata Das, who was leading the Hindu party, said : How true, my friends ! Yet what tragic scenes did we once witness from the Direct Action Day of the Moslem League on August 16th 1946 to this day among the Hindus and Moslems ?

A young Muslim : Yes, brother. These streets were littered with corpses. The oldest friendships were snapped. Brothers rose against brothers in the name of religion, and we felt, in the heart of our hearts, the poignancy of this most unnatural and abnormal relations prevalent between and the Hindus and us. We knew also that the League leaders only exploited our simple credulity to farther their own political ends.

An elderly woman, thin and weak, raised her eyes and said : They engineered and declared the Direct Action Day and our children, the poor among both the communities, became the cannon fodder, who were butchered and stabbed mercilessly by the hooligans and goondas. What did we achieve after all these blind and dark deeds which disgraced this old city of ours, this Bengal of ours, this India of ours ?

Das : Is there any other country better suited for the development of communal harmony than India where various religions, races and creeds have come and intermingled, have given and received one from the other ? Yet, in this glorious land we have witnessed scenes of communal barbarism that would have put to shame even the brute creation. We have here a country of which we can feel proud of. But can this country feel proud of us, we who have become the religious bigots, the communal vandals ?

Then a few Moslem boys came around and invited us to take tea with them. We continued the conversation with them.

The old woman : Yes, we should feel ashamed of ourselves for this great crime of ours, the communal cancer which starting from Calcutta on last August spread to Noakhali, Behar, the Punjab, the North West Frontier, Bombay and many other provinces and States in India. Now it is through Allali's grace and Mahatma ji's skill that peace returned to Calcutta. From here the hell started, from here should begin the heaven too.

Many Hindus, Moslems, and even some Anglo-Indians joined us there. After finishing tea, we got in a motor truck, and after waving the Union and Pakistan flags, drove along the Circular, Vivekananda and Chitpoor Roads. At the Zanjaria Street

Moslems received us with a big ovation and invited us to visit the Nakhoda Mosque. We got down and went to visit their shrine, where for full one year Hindus could not enter.

A *maulavi* came forward and took us around the mosque. While entering the portico, he said : It's by Allah's mercy that we got cured of one year of anger, hatred, revengefulness and got together again as friends and fellow-citizens. This is our prayer house, although Allah resides in every prayer hall, whether Moslem, Hindu, Christian or Jew. In fact the heart of man alone is the throne of God (*Admi ki dil khuda ka takhat hai*). Why not, friends, this whole Calcutta, this whole India, this Universe be called the temple of God ? The heart of man is God's tabernacle. Truth alone is the eternal scripture.

*"Savishalamidam viswam pavitram brahmamandiram
Chetah munirmalam thairtham satyam shastramanaswaram
Viswaso dharamamulo hi priti paramasadhanam
Swarthanashasthu vairagyam brahmairivam prakirthitam.*

An Anglo-Indian who did not know Sanskrit, asked the Maulavi about the meaning of the sloka. The Maulavi said : I am afraid I cannot translate it into good English. Will any one among you, please, translate it, or paraphrase it into good English ?

Nobody came forward, and hence Bharat Mata Das paraphrased it in the following lines :

God's holy temple is this vast universe ;
Wisdom alone is the pure land of pilgrimage,
Truth is man's everlasting scripture,
On the living faith is rooted every religion worth the name,
Love divine is the spiritual culture of man,
To bring self-seeking to end is the religious goal
By all God-seers proclaimed, always, in all climes.

The Anglo-Indian sahib : Wonderful. If all could soar to such spiritual summits as to understand the depths of such a catholic religion, the opiate of religious trade will then be neutralised, and mankind will be restored to its pristine splendour and unbiased thinking. The truth contained in the sloka which the maulavi recited can be accepted by the Christians, Hindus, Muslims, by all who want to raise religion on the rock-bottom of man, the Eternal. Thank you very much, friend, for telling us such a lofty truth.

We thought most of the Moslems were bigoted and narrow, but you are really a catholic Moslem.

Maulavi : Thanks are due to Khesub Chunder Sen, whose burning heart, whose Bengalee devotionalism, whose Indian catholicity, prompted him to sing this wonderful verse. What you thought about the Moslems is unfortunately true. On further investigation you will find that those who follow the highest ideal in any religion are very few, whether they are labelled as Hindus, Moslems or Christians. Allah, help us all to live our faith, that faith which binds men and women in common ties of love, friendship, comradeship, service and self-sacrifice endured in common, to uphold the cause of Truth or God, and the cause of our country, which in its geographical limits is India, in its ideal sense, is this vast Humanity !

Das : Yes, India ; this India of the Himalayas and the Indo-Gangetic planes, of the Deccan plateau, of the Malabar and Coromandel coasts. This India, which forms one fifth of the entire population of this planet, this wonderland, this dreamland of ours. This India, in whose lap we have had the fortune to be born ; this Mother India who gave us birth and love. This is our India ; here lies God's garden where Hindus, Moslems, Christians, Parsees live ; here are all religions, all races, all creeds represented. More than an ethnological and philological museum is this India of ours, this *Hindustan Hamara*.....

As Das said "*Hindustan Hamara*", we heard the sound of musical instruments being played out from the five storied house in the Zacharia Street. The music was melodious and we heard from a stone-throw distance, a boy and a girl, still in their sweet teens, singing in an angelic voice :

Sáré jahán sé achhá Hindostán Hamárá
Ham bulbulén hain iski, yih gulistán hamara

.....

Pahar jo sab se uncha hamsaya asman ka
Woh santari hamárá, woh pásbán hamara.
Godí mén khelti hain iski hazaron nadian
Gulshan hai jiské dam sé, raské jahan hamara.
Mazhab nahin sikhata apas mén bai rakhna
Hindi hain ham, watan hai Hindostan hamara
Saré jahan sé achiha.....

There was with us an English girl who was expiating the sins of the arrogant white imperialists by sacrificing herself and serving the lonely, forelorn and the lost in Calcutta. She approached Das and said : O that song is celestial. Do please translate it for me. Won't you ?

Das translating it sang :

Of all the wonderlands in this world the loveliest is our Hindustan
Wherein we are its nightingales, this our primrose-garden

.....
The highest mountain cliffs, the next neighbour to the blue skies,
Stand erect as our sentry, our protecting lines.

(Her's India) in whose lap play and dance thousands of rivers,
Making India a garden that's the envy of the world.

Religion does not teach us to bear enmity between ourselves.
Indians are all of us : India is our Motherland."

Das in his enthusiasm continued singing :

The dark night of the soul is long past,
The wind blows sweet, the sails are up and I move fast
On to the Yonder Shore. O divine *Bharatvarsha*,
My Soul's delight and rest, th'immortal *Aryavarta*,
Where blue skies, bright sunshine, pure air abound,
Where sacred earth and sparkling streams of water resound.
Poetic is this land, this gracious Mother of our birth and love,
This Hindustan Hamara, where the Aryan genius still survives ;
So receptive she is, the young lovely maid of the Heavely King.
Men and events pass away like the inrushing Jumna flood,
But perennial Vrindavan remains this ancient *Hindustan hamara*.
The semitic fanaticism and intolerance we will fight,
The brave sons and daughters of this new *Hindustan*,
Lest the fate that overtook the Zoroastrians in Persia,
The Afghans and the Moors be repeated in this wonderland *hamara*.
India's civilization will move with moving times,
But unconquered it should remain before the missionary bait,
The dazzling wheels of machines bright, or th' Islamic pest.
Deeply rooted I am in the unfathomable depths of love divine
Which Mother India gives, keeping me perpetually enthralled
At the sight of our birds and flowers, hills and mounts,
Children, boys and girls. Universal Love have I known,
Infinity have I seen ; let me sing it aloud throughout my life.

Without books now I become learned, without effort now I speak,
 Without moving an inch I join the Mover of all.
 My limbs fail ; my whole body becomes one living sense,
 One with my mind, with my heart, one with Cosmic consciousness,
 At the sight of my Mother Divine, my land, this *Hindustan hamara*.
 Blissful I am today, in an eternal ecstasy rapt,
 I forget this world at the vision of my Mother, *Hindustan hamara*.
 India's soul is Universal Humanity, catholicity divine ;
 Her life is Asia's life, Asia that's Light of the World.
 Let my heart grow, expand, embracing this planet dear,
 The suns and moons, the universe far and near ;
 O let me grow with widening vision, breaking down walls,
 Let me swing between Heaven and Earth in love Divine,
 By being true to India's soul, to the heritage of *Hindustan hamara*.
 A man I am ; no more qualifications I have, I need ;
 Come my Englishman, Chinaman, Japanese, American, Russian,
 Christians, Muslims, Jews and all, come and share India,
 This divine bride, in full-fledged love Divine.
 India's, rather Universal Humanity's, love has my heart wounded,
 I feel its pangs and sufferings more than a philosopher-lover,
 More subtly than a romantic girl, the love of this *Hindustan hamara*.
 The sufferings of love are sweet, for God is Love.
 India, my Mother, my Love Divine, take me and hold me fast
 To your fond breast, entralling me with your sweet embrace.
 To your service, my God-Love, my Love-God, I consecrate
 My life, my soul, my All. At their feet I fall prostrate.
 To serve, serve Thee, my God, in suffering and erring humanity
 Of this country mine, this India mine, this Asia, this world mine.
 Bless me, my God, my Country, to serve thee in Universal Humanity,
 The universal Humanity in Thee, all the days of my earthly life.

HINDU-MOSLEM EK HO

A Nationalist Muslim, who was at Singapore with Subhas Chandra's I. N. A. came forward and said, sang :
 The thrill of this day will never die,
 The meaning of August 15th, the deep sigh
 That today comes from every citizen of Hindustan,
 From the hearts of many perhaps in Pakistan.

As far me, my dear Bharat Mata Das, my life-ideal
 To adore and serve my country grows within me more real
 Than ever. The song of Bharat Mata I heard within 'me today,
 As the angels up above songs on short waves for my sake did relay,
 Which my sensitive heart has picked up. A walking wireless set
 I am to receive the hidden melody of this universe,
 To feel the touch and enchantment of the Infinite.
 I was not ever thus, nor prayed my God to lead me on ;
 Pride then ruled my will, the fire of lust has burnt me down,
 The subtle fibres of my heart. Now by His grace I am up,
 Whose power manifests in the green pastureland of Hindustan,
 In her monsoon rains, violent tempests, on her mounts and hills,
 In the riches of this India, our ancient land,
 In the smile and love of our Motherland,
 In the grace of her womenfolk, in the depths of her thought,
 In that calm poise of a Self-realized mind.
 But let not my undivided devotion to Hindustan
 Blind nor restrict my vision of this vast Mankind,
 Where the same story of love and suffering repeat.
 O let my heart expand like the infinite sky,
 Let my wings grow, enabling me to heavenly heights to fly.

At that time a Congress Hindu brought the Star and the Crescent and a League Moslem brought the Congress Tricolour, and crossed one over the other and hoisted them in the middle shouting : *Hindu Moslem ek ho*—Let the Hindus and Muslims become one.

Das : Yes, *Hindu Muslim ek ho*.

All the persons present there, then shouted in choir : *Hindu-Muslim ek ho*.

A Forward Blockist, then came forward and said : What a tragedy that India is divided on communal grounds ! That this ancient land was polluted by streams of communal tears and blood ! Even on this great historical day, August 15th 1947, fire burns in the walled city of Lahore, where murder, stabbing, loot and rape continue, disgracing the Punjab. Whose fault ? Who created these divisions ? Who is responsible for this tragedy ?

Somebody from the crowd answered : The quitting British, who continue their old divide-and-rule policy even when they withdraw from our country. The British, the British should

shoulder the major responsibility for the communal politics, and the consequent vivisection of India.

The Forward Blockist : O for goodness sake, let the British quit our shares in peace. The British certainly are largely responsible for everything in India, because the ultimate responsibility for the governance of the land was theirs. But now they are quitting. On the 17th, i.e. two days after the transfer of power, the first batch of British Tomies are quitting India's shores, sailing from Bombay. But the British could not have played their game if there was not adequate ground prepared by the Indians themselves in India. I maintain that it is the caste Hindus who drove the Moslem community into desperation. Desperation gets hold of the weapon it can. Partition of India was a cry of desperation and despondency, fear and uncertainties of the great Moslem community. Economically, educationally, and spiritually the Moslems are backward and perhaps their inferiority complex also was seen by Jinnah, who more for his personal ambitions than for any real interest in Islam, stuck firm to his reactionary policy of Pakistan. In Bengal most of the Moslems were literally hewers of wood and drawers of water for many years, until the League Ministry, now in office for the last ten years, turned the tables upside down, and defeated the superior Hindus by following up a communal policy in the political arena.

It's for this reason, I maintain the thesis of Subhas Chandra Bose that the answer to our troubles is a radical Socialist economy. Religious labels have to go. The fundamental rights and duties of the citizens are to be carefully drawn up and a new Constitution for free India is to be framed. The Netaji used to tell us : Gandhiji is a saint-socialist, whereas we have to plan for the masses who are neither philosophers nor saints. Gandhiji stands for decentralization, whereas socialist economy stands for the greatest possible centralization. Gandhiji still thinks in terms of God, whereas a Socialist's standard is Man. The poles that divide apart Gandhian constitution for Free India and the ideals of Marx-Lenin-Stalin is the gulf that exists between the moderate Congressman and the Forward Blockists.

Das : I am afraid, you are lagging behind the times. Gandhiji is revising his old theories under the light of facts and figures sifted from life, and is now trimming the sails according

to the wind. Do you not know that Gandhiji has lately stated in public that even non-violence, or *ahimsa*, the quintessence of Gandhism, is the unchangeable creed for him, but a changeable policy for the Congress. It is the sign of mental vitality that Gandhiji reviews his own position and public statements and prunes them according to the season and keeps them up-to-date. His greatness consists in having the courage to acknowledge his Himalayan blunders.

The logical consequence of this admission can justify the maintenance of a strong army for India both in time of war and peace, the centralization of Government machinery for the whole of the Indian Union and the scientific planning for the industrial development in India. Wardha Scheme may continue to play its part in rural economy and village industry. But India, as a whole, will march ahead, as one among the leading nations of the world. It is not without reason that Sardar Vallabhai Patel said that Pandit Nehru will be the leader of free India that is born, as Mahatmaji was once the leader in the fight for Indian Independence. In the economic and political life of India, Gandhiji's role is practically over, as it should necessarily happen to any prophet; but his contribution in other spheres, mostly social and spiritual life of the country, continues.

The Forward Blockist : Yes, we also believe that Gandiji will continue to play a great part in the social and spiritual life of the country. Although Subhas and Gandhiji are political opponents—for you will remember that Mahatmaji has stated that the victory of Subhas Chandra will be his (Gandhiji's) defeat—we are Indians, with the same blood and spirit in us as that of Gandhiji. We can see much better and from near the spiritual greatness of this little man who is himself a miracle. What a great miracle he has now achieved in Calcutta, in this riot-torn city of Bengal !

Das : Yes, I believe the part played by Mahatmaji is big. But miracle, at least in its theological sense, is out of question. The ground was already prepared for the Hindu-Moslem rapprochement. Both the communities, particularly the Moslems who form just 22% in Calcutta, were "fed up" with the existing conditions in the city. Somehow they felt that the older ties should be re-established. Subhrawardy Government failed miserably for many

years, particularly since August 16th 1946, the Direct Action Day. Finally it fell to pieces when the Assembly voted for the partition of Bengal. Suhrawardy failed to win the leadership in East Bengal, and now he is taking protection under the wings of Mahatmaji. He feels bitter about the suffering of his own community. Now that power has returned into the hands of the Congress, Suhrawardy Sahib fears that the retaliation on the Muslims might be terrible. Hence this time, he is sincere in his attempt to bring about lasting friendship and amity between the Hindus and Moslems, because he knows, that, should the fire break out, the losers would be the Moslems in the Indian Union.

So, I repeat, Gandhiji's contribution in restoring the peace of the city is indeed big ; but there is no miracle in it. This I say not to encourage the religious orthodoxies who believe in miracles and blind faith, not to knock down the popular enthusiasm and feelings towards the big work Mahatmaji is doing in our midst.

The Maulana : Hindu-Moslem unity is the need of the hour. No kind of progress is possible in the country as long as the internecine quarrels last. Hindu-Muslim unity is the prelude to the economic development of the country and the eventual reunion of Pakistan with residual India. For, notwithstanding the artificial division which mischievous politicians have engineered, India, as a geographical and spiritual unit, remains one and undivided. I am the first to proclaim that it is wrong for Pakistan or any Indian State to secede from India. I am, after all, a human being first, an Indian second and a Moslem third. The world is tending towards unity and the present balcanization-mania should be checked forthwith, lest the evil plant of isolationism and communalism send deeper roots, and it become more difficult to eradicate these noxious weeds from this garden of ours, this great and ancient land of ours, this India of ours, this *Hindustan hamara*. The Maulana, then, turning towards Das, said :

To you, to the youth of India, I would like to say ;
 Whether Hindus, Moslems or Christians they may
 Happen to be born, that this country we should serve
 With undivided attention, with unflinching resolve.
 Sacrifice *hic-et-nunc* enticements and grow,
 Expand your consciousness unto infinity. Sow
 The seeds of eternity in time. Unite, harmonize

The two main streams of cultures in this land,
 The Indo-Aryan and the Islamic, both great
 In their own way. If you don't, you deny India's soul,
 Which twines a garland out of varied flowers
 Grown in different gardens. Let the market of cultures
 Flourish in India, including all, not excluding,
 Embracing, not rejecting ; enfolding, not isolating.
 As a Sufi Muslim I should say to you, my friends,
 Let the thralldom of Law finish and grace abound,
 Amidst Hindus, Muslims, Parsees, Sikhs, Jains, all.
 Asoka and Akbar are two big names
 And forget not the inexhaustible mine
 Of spiritual wealth hidden in the Maurya dynasty,
 In the Mogul Empire, and also in the British period.
 Now lads and girls of new India, arise,
 Be the architects of a land still more glorious,
 Mightier, stronger, nobler than ever before.
 Wed your life to your ideal that looms like a sun
 In the far-off dreamland in our Motherland.

Das : Yes, friend, words of high wisdom flow
 Which bestir us, inspiring us to row
 Onward, forward, Truthward.
 The modern youth of India of either sex
 Are now called upon to raise a new Monument,
 Th' eternal Taj in this wonderland.
 Hindu-Muslim unity, economic development,
 Industrial progress, and the fulfilment
 Of India's mission, are our new ideals.
 Dreamers though we are, facts and figures
 We do not miss. A realistic temple w'll build
 On the shores of India's great Humanity.
 India should march forward with head erect,
 Great in her spiritual might, and military power,
 In the new synthesis which the world awaits to hear,
 Which to learn, to grasp, pine nations far and near.
 A new Jerusalem w'll build on the ruins of the old
 Which will for all generations to come unfold
 The wealth of spirituality, the Legacy of India
 Which proudly we will preserve and enhance.

Afterwards we got back in the lorry. As we approached the corner of the Zacharia Street and the Chittaranjan Avenue, there came an enthusiastic crowd of Moslems welcoming the Hindus, and the Hindus reciprocating their friendship and love by shouting : "Hindu-Muslim ek ho" and "Pakistan Zindabad."

A boy from the Moslem crowd, by name Abdul Zafarulla, speaking in polished Urdu said that the Hindu-Moslem unity was the first condition required of all citizens without which nothing positive nor constructive could be done in the Indian Union and in Pakistan. He maintained that if the Hindus and Moslems got together the division of India also would automatically cease to be. "The foreigners have taken advantage of our ignorance and bigotry and our country is divided. Brother is divided against the brother, sister against the sister. Now, that the foreigners have gone away from our shores, time has come for us to unite ourselves in heart and spirit and bring back the seceding parts of India back to the Indian Union, the common Motherland for all. I do not say this as a Nationalist Muslim ; I say this as a reformed Leaguer. The National Congress which bore the brunt and burn of the nationalist struggle, which suffered and was martyred, which stood and fought for the unity of the country, in the last moment, sees the country divided against itself and the two major communities growing wild, raging mad, one against the other. The Leaguers got their "truncated, moth-eaten Pakistan" with the British support, and one year of goondaism, and a few months of propaganda. I am not going to be lenient towards the Congress either which, by degrees, is forfeiting the sacred trust. Unfortunately most of the Congressmen have identified themselves with that wretched Hindu Mahasabha, the communal counterpart to the Moslem League."

Abdul continued : Are not most of the marvaries still Hindu Mahasabhaites ? That Syama Prasad, the son of the great Ashutosh Mukherjee, has sold his heart and mind to the Mahasabhaites. Are not Moslems, Christians, equally citizens of this great nation ? Or if the League is wrong—and I think it is from beginning to end—can it be rectified by setting up a rival communal counterpart ? Is fire quenched by fire ?

Nor can I be less critical with Gandhiji himself ? He is cent per cent a Hindu and his claim to represent Moslems, Christians

and other communities is more a diplomatic game than real truth. Rabindranath could have assumed that role, but not Gandhiji. Gandhiji is a reckless individualist, and his personal mysticism has taken him nearest to God and has made him really a Mahatma. Yet his undiluted subjectivist dynamic mysticism has also done much harm to the country. As the abolition of the Kaliphat proved the hollowness of the cause he then diplomatically championed, so are his many reckless launching into certain political activities. No doubt, Gaudhiji has been instrumental in alienating the League more and more from the Congress, where, due to the magnetic personality of the Mahatma and the hypnotic effects it produced on the uncritical minds, who form the largest number among the Congressmen, communalism, corruption, nepotism and other social ills are creeping, not because of, but inspite of, Mahatma Gandhi.

Yet that little man remains the great individual of our generation, perhaps the greatest man in India, perhaps the greatest individual in the world today. But let us leave to history that judgment. I do feel sure that a time will come, when as Dr. Albert Einstein has said, the posterity will hardly believe that such a man as the Mahatma has ever lived in flesh and blood amidst us.

The image of God he is on this earth,
Born to teach the world that violence is nothing worth.

Lo ! a disciple greater than the master ; for Tolstoy but preached,
Whereas Gaudhiji lived and practiced what prophets extolled.

Even in his old age, younger he grows in life-vigour,
Putting to shame the younger chatterboxes whose rift
From the romantic idealism of the master-prophet
Has grown so deep, is now so clearly set.

The salt of India's humanity he remains,
As a light-house placed on the mountain top he shines.

His life is an open book to the thinking youth,
Not for India's youth alone, but for the whole mankind.

What God is in His Unmanifest form we know not ;
But His radiant grace and love are revealed

In the incomparable life of Bapuji, the man of India,
Who is a challenge to the nominal Christian West,
Who has restored India's cult to its untarnished splendour.
Saint, sage, prophet, Gandhiji great,
Whose life is an open book, whose deeds are spirit,

Whose exemplary life alone is infinitely worth more
 Than the lip-service of mammon-worshippers for us to soar
 Into the unseen heights of Love and grace divine.
 Amidst this all-round encircling gloom
 A guardian angel thou art, who, like the gentle moon,
 Emit the romantic, cool, refreshing, greenish rays,
 Unfolding the inexhaustible fountain of love and grace.
 March, Gandhiji, march, go, dear Saint, go, go
 On to the land of your sweet dreams, to utopia.
 Save India, save mankind from the bondage of sin and death,
 And assert th' immortal heritage of India which neither
 Panditji, nor Subhas Bose have understood as fully as the
 nightingale
 Of Hindustan, Rabindranath of immortal fame did,
 Or as your own dear personality has grasped.

BHARAT MATA

Afterwards we drove and, while riding along the Cornwallis Street, there was seen a wonderful illumination which looked like a cross from the corner of the Vivekananda Road and Cornwallis Street crossing. There was a large wooden plank shaped like India.

It was beautifully decorated in various colours. The intermittent electric lights all around gave brighter glow to India at every two seconds. In the middle stood a boy—a girl—I do not know who—dressed up like Bharatmata. In one hand she held the National Tricolour, in the second a conch shell, in the third a lotus flower and in the fourth she held a pot showering gifts and graces to her children below. That wonderful scene was a world in itself. Das then said :

The lights of Calcutta adds lustre to your gracious form,
 Your chains are now broken, Mother India, grow, thrive.
 You are no longer bound hands and feet,
 Now like sweet Saraswati you extend your arms
 To shower the blessings on all your children here.
 Your feet touch the Cape beyond the blue waters,
 Your head raises far above, stretches far beyond,
 The snow-capped mountains of the divine Himalayas ;

Your bountiful arms are extended today from Assam to Baluchistan
 Ready to show us the way, to the sons and daughters of this
 flower-garden of ours, this Hindustan hamara.

Bharat Mata Das, at that time, enthralled by the scenes, fell into an ecstatic swoon. On the 15th night the stars were keeping watch over the Bharat Mata whose chains were broken. The clouds were moving swiftly and the moon was playing a kind of hide and seek game. The streets were crowded and the whole Calcutta lived that night in the open air, in roads, lanes and bye-lanes. Never did India witness such a celebration, such spontaneous outbursts of joy for the newly won independence. Really 15th August was not the day of freedom ; it was just the beginning of our freedom.

Bharat Mata Das was perhaps the only man in those crowds who, filled with emotion, experienced the super-conscious blessedness and the ineffable thrill of the touch of the infinite vision of Love on that 15th August celebrations. He got down from the lorry, went to the Baharata Mata, represented so artistically and magically at the Cornwallis Street, and stood there just looking at that representation. He stood there for over one hour, fully absorbed in contemplative bliss, in blissful contemplation. The free son of Hindustan was adoring the Beauty and Love of his Mother, Bharat Mata !

By that time the crowd began to gather and shout all sorts of slogans. Moslems from the New Market, Park Circus, Machua Bazar and Raja Bazar passed along and fraternized with the Hindus. But the friends of Bharat Mata Das had left him as they could not find him any more. But he stood there like a king, descended from heaven, adoring and worshipping the beauty and love of his Mother, India.

Then the goddess Saraswati and the nymph Sophia inspired Bharat Mata Das to sang :

For years long I roamed about seeking in vain
 For a grand ideal to live by and die for in this main
 Which now I have found as a gem most precious and grand
 In the loyal service of God and my Motherland.
 Humanity is an abstraction. Through tangible love
 Of my near and dear ones mankind I must serve.
 What's this unending musical poetry I hear within me ?

The thrill of the ineffable happiness dawns upon me,
 Water, air, this sacred land of Hindustan and her breeze
 Are become alive, raising me aloft to the yonder skies.
 Now for ever I will remain at thy feet,
 On the flowing river banks of India I'll rest
 Listening to that ever-fresh music of thy humanity,
 O India, where beams forth from the dusk the sun of Divinity.
 Now life is meaningful to me,
 Pregnant with a divine significance ;
 No, I shalln't waste thy precious gifts any more,
 For I have pulsed this ancient land and her sacred lore.
 Heal, now, Physician of my soul, those wounds
 Inflicted by me on my self with those past misdeeds.
 Cleanse me, now, Saviour, cleanse me of all those blots
 Which engender death, my mind clost and heart petrify.
 Thee, God of my heart, the Soul of my soul, let me realise
 In my search after Truth, in flames of love,
 In the poetry which children inspire,
 In the music of Creation which pilot my barge in its

onward move.

This India is my country, my country is Humanity,
 This world of the five continents and of the seven seas,
 This vast universe is my land, my adored fatherland,
 Th' Universal Mother in whose lap I am born, my Motherland.
 With my music and creation, my Lord, I'll serve Thee,
 Reality, Truth and Love of this Universe.
 In voluntary poverty and a true celibate life
 Let me offer my heart on the altar of my Motherland,
 This India, this triangular land, divine, grand,
 This tiny planét of both the East, North, Sonth and West.
 Let no narrow nationalism choke my spirit,
 Nor restrict the vision of my mind—
 O let me see far off, prognosticate aright
 Far beyond the limits of time and space.
 My divine saree, India's ideal womanhood,
 Sing your songs and soothe the ailments
 Worries and sweat of man, born to labour and to fight.
 Gods and goddesses of India, keep me within your 'embrace !
 No house of my own I now need ; no wife of my own,

India's blue skies will be henceforward my roof,
 India's womanhood my inspiration and thrill of life ;
 For all I have, all I enjoy, by renouncing,
 For in renunciation is bliss.

Tena tyaktena bhunjita—Enjoy Him by renouncing.

Thereafter Das wandered alone through the streets, by-lanes and street—corners meditating, fully absorbed in that ecstasy derived from the heart-vision and love-touch of his Motherland. With none he talked thereafter, being fully immersed in the ocean of ineffable bliss. The music of Indian skies, air and nature was there and Das experienced that infinite joy which only experience, not description, can convey. Das then remembered the words of St. Paul who said, after being rapt up "to the third heaven": "He was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable word, which it is not possible for a man to utter" (II. Cor. XII. 4). Plotinus, Origin, Boetius, Plato, Jamblicus, Dante Algieri in the West, Buddha, the rishis who composed the Upanishadic lore, Laotze, Jallaluddin Rumi and a host of other prophets and philosophers have spoken about this glimpse into the bliss of mind and heart, the unspeakable joy of poetic rapture, of mystic rhapsody, of idealist realisation of the Self.

Das spent the whole night in silence, thought and rapture. The morning came of 16th August and still the same enthusiasm of the people continued. Although shallower minds thought that 15th August brought heaven and freedom for the country, cooler brains saw clearly that it was just the beginning of the era of freedom. The quitting of the British meant but something negative. As a young boy and a girl, after the day of their marriage go and spend their honey-moon in romantic places, where they see but roses and not the thorns of life, so did Calcutta, India on the 15th August and on the subsequent days. In fact, the romanticism and the idealist dreams that usually precede marriage wedlock are but the nectar by which Nature puts the yoke of responsibility on to the heart of two loving mates, a yoke lightened and sweetened by the bonds of love. As long as the idealist love lasts there is not that dawncast eye, that weary and worried look, in the young partners. But when the lamp of love is extinguished, then begins the up-hill march of the family heads. So, with India: Now is the time for work ; but the glow and charm and thrill of 15th

August were quite enough to carry us along through the rest of our strife, all those who, on that day, dedicated their life and love to the service of their country and, indeed, of the whole human family.

Early in the morning at the Cornwallis Square Das saw many children bathing in the tank, singing merrily, dancing freely. Lads and tender girls were swimming in the pool, crowds of people were enjoying their morning walk. India's love is lavished everywhere, on her mountains, in her planes, on her men, on her women-folk. This great, ancient immortal land is ours, this *Hindustan hamara*. If a zamindari can own this or that plot of land, an Indian patriot can own as his own this entire subcontinent, with all the forests and fields, with all men and women in this great family where mixed are found Aryans and Dravidians, Huns and Pathans, Greeks and Romans, the Chinese and the Mughals. This wonder-land is ours ; this India is ours, this *Hindustan Hamara*.

Das spent the whole day in deep thought and practical idealist dreams. His food on that day was to think out ways and means to serve his country. He said in truth with Jesus Christ : "My food is to accomplish the will of him who sent me".*

The evening sun was slowly setting behind the red skies of the west. On the Howrah bridge the national tricolour tolled the birth of the new Indian Nation to all the vessels, national and foreign, which had anchored in the Calcutta harbour. The planes were flying showing the heights which India should reach. Das was walking alone near a street when he heard a girl singing :

*Watan hamara najat pà chukkhà,
 Mulk hamara azad ho gayà,
 Meri dil, Meri jan, khusi se nach karti hai
 Hamesha ke liye ham khidmat kar rahenge des ko.
 Suraj ke niche men hindusthan ki manind hamara,
 Bhulbaghan is dunya men nehin hai koi. Bap kamara,
 Ma hamari, prem hamara, sab ke sab hai
 Hindusthan Hamara.*

*Asmàn se jo zahir hui khuskhabari yihî hai
 Taki Khudavand ke baghan men ham kam kar rahan,
 Jis se baghair zindagi ka matlab dusra nahiñ hai,
 Dil ki azadi, desh ki taraqqi, taki ham karen.*

* John IV. 34.

Watan hamra uajat pà chukkà,
Mulk hamara azad ho gaya.....

Which means :

Our country has attained her salvation,
Our Motherland has now become free,
My heart, my life, dance in the ocean of joy,
For all time to come we will serve (our country).
Underneath the sun a rose-garden like our Hindustan
In this world there is none. Father is ours (India),
Our Mother, our love, our all, is our Hindustan.
The gospel revealed from heaven is this
That we may serve the garden of the Lord,
Which is for our life the supreme aim,
That we win freedom to our hearts, greatness of our land.
Our country has attained her salvation,
Our Motherland has now become free.....

Das, enticed by the song, walked nearer and saw a young girl dressed up in Pujabi costume. She wore a pair of silk pyjamas. The shawl hanging around her neck was pure khaddar. On approaching nearer, and looking more closely, Das discovered that she was the same Muslim girl who was singing Bande Mataram, the previous day.

The streets and roads were busy ; and then everyone felt that all Indians were brothers and sisters among themselves. The traditional barriers of the purdha and the veil, of the conservative Indian seclusion, were not there. As Das was approaching her with wonder and love, she turned her eyes skywards, towards the twinkling stars, and continued to sing :

These eternal stars are ours,
The moon, sun and this entire universe.
In India shine the brightest jewels
Of varied Humanity, in an infinite variety.
Lads and girls bestir, up with the moving tide,
Take your armour and fight on your Mother's side.
These eternal stars are ours,
All that flower and fructify in India's vast humanity,
The highest mountain peaks and the dense forest lands,
The dancing rivers and flowing streams,
The flora and fauna of this our glorious land,

Which will grow and bestow the message of Universal Humanity,
 To the world, this grand family, wherein we are born,
 Wherein we struggle to assert the eternal verities
 About God and Mankind, the truth of love and faith.
 These eternal stars are ours,
 This refreshing Calcutta breeze,
 The versatile, emotional, Bengali genius,
 These blue skies up above, these teeming millions
 In India, one fifth of the earth, all are ours.
 Man-power is great, resources rich, soil sacred,
 Vegetation luxuriant in our India, *Hindustan hamara*.
 These eternal stars are ours,
 The raging seas and the swelling rivers,
 Ours are the hill tribes and the mountaineers,
 The peasant and the prince, the potter and the poet,
 With all the glories of the past ages,
 Rich in India's annals, pride of our youthful hearts.
 This our heredity, this our legacy, from India,
 Our Mother, our Love, this *Hindustan hamara*.

Das, then, responded singing :

Far, far away, I hear a voice that bespeaks,
 Portrays, interprets, the longings of my inner needs.
 Are they true, or can it be that my heart that sings ?
 O Angel dear, tell me where you park your wings
 That soar so high as to transplant me in eternal bliss.
 India we paint as a woman, a lady with love and grace,
 That captivates a poet's imagination and heart.
 Man and woman are the two principles of the same life.
 From ancient times woman has inspired men with a thrill,
 Her dishevelled hair, her loving eyes, her rosy lips and cheeks.
 In fact she inspires and man sings. Nature is woman,
 For she is grace and love. Nature-god is India, my adored Love.

Then the girl approached the boy and the boy approached the girl. The name of the Muslim girl was Fatima Azad, perhaps a spiritual descendant of Sir Syed Ahmad Khan, the founder of the Anglo-Muhammadan College, which, later on, developed into the present Aligarh University. But she studied deeply the writings of Rabindranath Tagore and thus became a spiritual heir to Ram Mohun Roy, rightly the Father of Modern India.

Das : Today my joy is complete in so far as I found Free India in you, an embodiment of freedom, grace and love which is Mother India to me. Guide me on, and I'll follow your steps. Teach me and I'll harken to your voice, for the more free man I am, the more free I long to be. The more I know of you, the more I long to know from you. Hence, I repeat, tell me more about it. Tell me again what you are.

Fatima : *Hindustan ki beti hun*—I am the daughter of Hindustan. Nothing more than this I want to say, for everything is included in this one word—a daughter of Hindustan.

Das : Yes, now I understand. Now my vocation dawns in my mind, for I am the son of Hindustan—*Hindustan ka beta hun*.

So saying, they both walked along the Harrison Road. They talked all the way from the Harrison Road to the Sealdah Station, whence they took the train and disappeared.

CHAPTER II.

HINDU-MUSLIM UNITY

Rain was falling in torrents up in the Khasi Hills. The graceful hill station of Shillong smiled as the two comrades-in-arms arrived there after two days journey from Calcutta. Both looked gay and cheerful, holding their suit case in one hand and the light beddings in the other. As the bus arrived, two "coolies" rushed in and asked Das : Coolie Sir ? Das with a smile answered : We are our own coolies, and the so-called "coolies" are our masters, our deities, "*naradevatas*". The coolie system existed when the foreigners dominated over our country. They have gone away and coolie system should exist no more. Either all Indians are coolies or none should be a coolie in free India. So saying Das took a one rupee note and gave it to the "coolie" and walked down with Fatima.

Complete strangers to Shillong. Where to find accomodation for the night ? They both walked in to the Y.M.C.A, and admission was denied to them on the ground that they were not "Christians". Certainly if the modern Y.M.C.A.s. do not make any distinction between Christians and non-Christians that is partly due to expediency, and partly due to the diplomatic gesture, as they want to cover up the intellectual shallowness of their official religion with some sort of social etiquette. But the ignorant and undiplomatic warden of that Y.M.C.A. denied them accomodation, and that thick and rainy night they had to spend under the sky-roof, protected by the grace of Heaven alone and the benevolent pine woods of the Shillong Peak.

Das : I trust you are not discouraged, Fatima.

Fatima : Discouraged ? Napolean Buonaparte said that defeat is the word to be found only in the dictionary of fools. I would say that the words dejection, despondency and despair are to be found only in the dictionary of infidels. I consider myself a Muslim, as you say you are a Hindu. To me religion is the most personal affair, but real, bearing its practical implications in life, specially when trials and tribulations rage wild in our life, when everything else seems dismal and gloomy, when the last ray of hope is gone, and one is left to oneself to solve the riddle of

life. Nay even God Himself seems to abandon—He never really abandons us though—and we seem to cry aloud from the heart with Nazarath Isha : “My God, why hast thou abandoned me” ?*

We have to hold on, my dear Bharat, for life is a struggle. The tug-of-war between the flesh-and-blood-man and the spirit-mind-man is constant, and we win the battle of life only when the spirit, the mind or values have gained the upper hand and defeat the laws and instincts of the flesh and blood. This struggle, this continuous victory of the spirit over matter, of the inner man over the outer man, gives us that constant inspiration of life, that vivid sense of profound humanistic feelings and vision in life. I personally would not dare to live for a single day when that poetry and inspiration of life have ceased to awake and arouse my inner being, through my own fault, through constant stunting and materializing of my mind and spirit through self-indulgence, living under the sway of the passion-clouds.

Continuing the conversation, they walked from the Y.M.C.A. to Leban, and from Leban they climbed up the Shillong Peak, where, underneath the dense pine trees, with some branches and leaves they made a small hut where they repaired for the night.

Das stood like a pasha inside his new palace and looked around. He could see the glimmering lights in the town below and the dense woods and scattered hills all around. Then raising his eyes towards the skies, he sang :

You, my Alex Shelki, where are you gone ?

Let me sing with you : “I am the monarch of all I survey,
My right there is none to dispute”—no—all to dispute,
Better dwell underneath these skies than in a princely palace,
Where the law of sword and pride reign supreme.

O Solitude, all the charms which the sages have seen in your face
Now return with redoubled thrill and I’m inspired.

Yes, Fatima, you are right. I also would’nt dare to live
For a single day without this poetic charm in life.

Right attitude of mind alone is bliss,
Not in hoarding of gold nor in smashing blonds.
The heaven and hell lie within man,
Each man his prison makes and himself frees.

In this fleeting show of men and events,
 On this great stage where men and women play their part,
 Whence to the great Unknown they all then depart,
 Let me be the true child of this ancient land,
 Which taught me that goal of life is Self-realization,
 That fulfilment of our Being in undivided devotion.
 Khrisua have I bought—the price he asked I payed,
 More dearly than Radha in Brindaban, some jeer "too great",
 But I gave up myself, my all, at Love's altar,
 To consecrate myself to that Sat-Chit-Ananda, hear.

Then they sat together on a log, and while eating a piece of bread, Fatima remarked : Now we are here. This is a world of our own. A sufi saint or a Hindu Yogi, a philosopher, a scientist, a business-man, a statistician, a bacteriologist, all live in their own little worlds. Don't they ? Now each man and woman are a world to themselves ! India is a world to India, but less important for an Italian. Calcutta is all-important to the Calcutta citizens, but a second-hand information for the people in Bombay. Even in Calcutta, at Ballygunge the aristocracy form a world of their own, cut off from the North and Central Calcutta, where the common Indian citizens predominate. But the North and South Calcuttas are different from the Chowringhee side and near-abouts where white and brown *sahibs* and *mcm sahebs* live. Nay, in one single house the adolescent youth is a world to himself, the parents form another world, the playing children quite another.

If we analyse ourselves carefully we can see an infinite variety of consciousness within us. At times we are glad, at times sorrowful. At times we are rapt into the third heaven, at other times we are dragged down to the lowest inferno. Now we should strive to gain the best possible mental state and continue to grow in it everyday. Mind, through consciousness, is all. Change the state of consciousness and the man is changed. Happiness and misery, heaven and hell, are but different states of consciousness. If only men could understand this entire subjectivity of the whole life, they can easily become the architects of their own destiny. One has to make up one's own mind by oneself. Nothing outside the mind can help him or her to forge ahead. God helps only those who help themselves.

Bharat : Do you mean to say that not even God can help us to find our own way ?

Fatima : Yes, but God helps those who help themselves. It's ours to start, God's to accomplish. Yet, mind you, there is no God outside the mind of man. The individualized mind is but a streamlet of the ocean of the Cosmic Consciousness, like a canal dug from the Pacific. But the mind is one with All. When a person has realized this truth experientially, all woes end, all miseries cease. It is for this personal character of Self-realization that discipline and a strong iron will are needed. The Kingdom of Truth and inner strength are for the steel-willed. I remember, a few years ago, while my father read out to me a book called "An Iron Will", I learnt by heart those verses of Ella Wheeler Wilcox, who said :

"There is no chance, no destiny, no fate
 Can circumvent, or hinder or control
 The firm resolve of a determined soul.
 Gifts count for nothing ; will alone is great,
 All things give way before it soon or late.
 What obstacle can stay the mighty force
 Of the sea-seeking river in its course ?
 Or cause the ascending orb of day to wait ?
 Each well-born soul must win what it deserves.
 Let the fool prate of luck. The fortunate
 Is he whose earnest purpose never swerves,
 Whose slightest action or inaction serves

the one great aim"*

Bharat : I think you are right, Fatima. No quietism, no passivity, no predestination grace paves the way for creative enterprise. One has to work out one's freedom by oneself. None outside him can lay even a single brick to build up his inner tabernacle. Nor any one can destroy his temple of Self-realization. Lord Buddha has said : "Self is the Lord of self ; what higher Lord could there be ? Not even a god can undo the victory of him who has subdued his self and lives under restraint".†

Fatima : If men had only just reflected upon these basic truths about human life, they would not have continued to quarrel

* An Iron Will, by Orison Sweet Marden, Ch. II.

† Dhammapada, 160.

about a mere piece of straw. I have seen with my own eyes brother rising against brother, citizens killing their own fellow-citizens in the name of religion. Yet, what is religion but deepest humanity? From that senseless Direct Action Day, launched by the League Ministry in Bengal, on that ever memorable date of 16th August 1946, down to the Miracle Day in Calcutta, on the eve of the British quitting our country, we have had many scenes to see, many woeful tales to hear from Calcutta, Bengal, Noakhali, Behar, the Punjab and other parts of India. I did not want to remain just a helpless spectator of these tragic scenes. Long before Gandhiji undertook the apostolate of the Hindu-Muslim unity, believe me, there were hidden souls, who risked their life, honour, their everything, just to bring back the two largest communities in India together. For we know that there will be no ordered growth and uninterrupted progress possible in our country without achieving the Hindu-Muslim unity on a permanent basis.

It is true that the appalling ignorance and poverty of the masses are responsible for these religious riots in the twentieth century India. It is truer that the foreign exploiter preyed upon the credulity and inflammable nature of the religious fanatics in India to cater for their own greed. It is true that imperial powers thrive only on the division and ignorance of the subject races. Once the national unity is achieved, the national solidarity is fully realised, a country can never be a slave. Of all the evils that threaten to corrode and sap the vitality of the Indian nation the foremost are communalism, poverty, ignorance and isolationism. We have to free India from these bondages so that India may be free from within. The British withdrawal is but the negative side of Indian freedom, the *conditio sine qua non*, of course, for achieving communal harmony, economic development, for educating the masses, for bringing India in line with the most progressive countries of the world that anticipate the dawn of the twenty first century.

Bharat : Do continue, Fatima. You are giving expression to what my own heart has been thirsting for, for such a long time. You know, for the last few years India has been looming brighter in my mind, in my heart. India I dream like a celestial nymph, whose feet touch Cape Comorin, whose head rests in Kashmir. Her hair flows throughout the land. Her all-embracing arms stretch

towards Burma and Afganistan. The fiery nationalism that burns within me is essentially Indian, and hence catholic, the ideal of the Universal Man, of the divine Humanity. Hence I have worshipped this heavenly queen and have dedicated myself to her service. Money, possessions, name, fame and all those which most people struggle to achieve mean nothing to me. I know I must serve this adored Mother of mine all the days of my life and I am straining every nerve to sublimate my lower energies and canalize them all to one single purpose, service of my God through serving humanity, serve Humanity by serving India. When I first heard your song, your voice, your gracious face, I heard, I saw, India in you, humanity in you, embodiment of love and grace in you. They may say that we have eloped. But, for us, it means but deeper understanding of man and integration of man's thought with feminine grace, of feminine grace with man's thought. You are now sitting by my side, yet, in the heart of my heart, I am lonely. I know, nothing great, worthwhile, creative is ever achieved without passing through this loneliness. One must journey along through this life's solemn main alone. Years or months or days have been granted to us by the decree of the Most High. We are His stewards. His temple are our hearts. With purity, simplicity and single-minded devotion we have to fulfil our mission which Nature-God inspires to us through the dictates of conscience. I know conscience is the infallible oracle of God within. This has saved me from shipwreck ; this my infallible and unfailing guide. I am here by the decree of God. I shall be here just as long as conscience dictates. In this solitude of Khasi Hills I feel I should think out ways and means to serve my country, possibly with you, but necessarily with God or Pure Reason. Until I become simple like a dove, innocent like a child, I know I shall never know His way, my path, in life. Like a good guardian angel you lead me on through this life's raging wave and let's proceed on until you and I find our way.

Fatima : O do tell me more about you. What are you after ? What aim do you pursue in life ? What is the meaning of existence ?

Bharat : Meaning of existence is not certainly mere vegetation, as most of the socially-secure and so-called "educated bourgeoisie" think in India, England, France, everywhere. The criticism levelled against those sophisticated and adulterated classes

of humanity by J. J. Rousseau in France, by Leo Tolstoy in Russia, by H. D. Thoreau in America, by William Morris in England, Mazzini in Italy and Kahlil Gibran in Palestine is eye an eye-opener to us all. We are out to destroy this artificiality and duplicity in life, to bring back the normal and natural relationship between man and man, between man and woman. This natural state of affairs means removing the communal virus, the capitalist exploitation, and raising up of a Socialist State, the Kingdom of God upon earth. It was when I was crossing the blue waters of the Indian ocean, not far away from the port of Colombo, still under the monsoon rage, standing alone on the mast, that the angel of the Lord whispered into my ears, with a gentle musical melody, which sang :

This is the night in which your mission unto you is revealed,
To return to your country and courageously embark upon the task,
The noble work the gulfs to bridge, races and creeds to unite
On the rock-bottom of the Eternal Man.

So, Fatima, I am here to work silently and steadfastly for this great aim. Today in the political horizon of India shine stars like Gandhiji, Panditji, Patelji and Prasadji. Let them take the honour which is their due. But I know those unnumbered patient workers, whose obscure apostolate and constructive work may prove more useful to the nation than the advertised names and much-spoken leaders. Among these silent workers I want to be one, firm like a rock, pure like a crystal, simple and unsophisticated like a child, and contribute my share in the building up of our nation. These are prophets, perhaps not recorded in the history of men, but shining in the conscience of sages and saints. They are too big to condescend to lend their names for advertising, too lofty even to write or speak in public. Their bliss is too ineffable and they never condescend to marry and create a family. Their consciousness grows too wide and not any single nation can imprison their love. They grow and expand into the heart of humanity, into this infinite Cosmos. These words are to be meant literally, not as a rhetorical flourish, and let none laugh at what I say. Only a man of experience can weigh and judge what I say.

With my own eyes have I seen men and women who fought valiently for values, defying might and power of money and position. My ears have hearkened to their songs. They were as

steadfast as Buddha under the Boe-tree, or Hitler in his iron will. Panditji and Mahatmaji are great men. But I want you to understand that there are greater men than those whose names have surged forth to the pages of history. History in a poor representation of human life, and often it depicts the outside of the Real. That does not mean that historical men have not deeper roots. Far be from it. Names like Buddha, Jesus and, in our own days, of Gandhiji, have fibrous roots on the surface and a tap root going deep into the depths of Infinity.

This gave me inspiration to embark upon fresher experiments. The ideal still looms before my mind. I know I shall never be able to reach it, for it is an infinite vision and ideal that shines bright before my heart. Poor indeed should be that ideal that can be fully realised. Ideals give us wings to fly ; but the farther we soar, the more remote becomes the ideal, even as the horizon, seemingly touching the sea, to the eyes of a voyager. I do not want for me, nor for my country, for anybody whom I love, any ideal that could be fully achieved. An achieved ideal is either poor, or it proves that we are God. I want to be man and not God. I want to have an ideal that will continually inspire me to strive and soar, and will be the mainspring that will make the whole machinery of life move in tune with the Infinite. O how I thirst for that ideal !

Fatima : Won't you tell me your ideal, Bharat ?

Bharat : To work for the religious unity, specially between the Hindus and Muslims in India, to bestow for my mind and for others a sort of philosophic basis to build their social, economic, and political life, to realise in myself first, and then help others, the ineffable bliss of a noble, idealistic and lofty life. It's a herculean task ; but I do not shrink from arduous and strenuous labour. *Non recuso laborem*—I do not shun labour, is a fine motto.

The scenes of communal riots in India aroused all the slumbering nerves within my heart, and I am convinced that the Hindu-Muslim unity, about which all the emancipated minds in Indian history dreamt from the time of Akbar's *Din Illahi*, down to men like Surendranath Banerjee, Vivekananda, Keshab Chunder Sen, Rabindranath Tagore and Mahatma Gandhi, is worth achieving.

Time was when I was a Marxian Socialist and I did subscribe to his doctrine of "Poverty of Philosophy", a scientific reply Marx gave to the "Philosophy of poverty" *philosophie de la misere*, on

contradictions économiques—of J. P. Proudhon. Now I am convinced that man is not mere flesh and blood, nor exclusively a disembodied spirit, but the blended whole of both. A well-balanced life between the laws of the brute and the angel is the lot of the ordinary folk ; mere vegetative life is the lot of the animal men, whose number, unfortunately is legion. But divine men and prophets, and philosopher-statesmen should abide essentially by spirit, for "Man lives not by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God".* Now I am convinced that there should be some deep philosophic basis for the ordered growth of the individual and of the society. I am determined to fight for the claims and rights of those prophets who have given us the psychological essentials of auto-redemption, and then build up a stable society on these philosophic and humanistic foundations. Mere science of producing and distributing the wealth of a nation without the corresponding degree of self-knowledge, self-control and self-realisation, are not worth striving for.

The cancer of communalism in India is the first problem to be solved permanently before undertaking any positive and constructive nation-building task by the new Government of Free India. We do not need any patched-up work, nor purely a diplomatic and political solution to the communal problem in India, which has already divided this indivisible India into two parts, with all the potential dangers of continued warfare and communal tension between the two major communities in both the new Dominions, into which India is vivisected by the British, with the connivance or weakness of both the Congress and the League.

Fatima : Do you then think that the Hindu-Muslim unity is the first pre-requisite for any ordered growth in the country ? Because there are many items in the political and economic overhaul development that should be the prime occupation of the free Government of India. They argue that food, cloth and shelter is the basis of every civilised life, whether social, religious, cultural or philosophical spheres.

Bharat : After the withdrawal of the British, which is not yet complete, I strongly feel that the communal problem should be tackled efficiently and permanently. The reason is quite obvious. Even the economic development of the country cannot be thought

of without internal peace. Now the biggest menace to internal peace in India is the tension between the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs. Both the foreigners, who are still in India either as businessmen, missionaries or wire-pullers, and the intriguing capitalists-cum-goondas are to be gaured against. The Government could and should bring about this internal peace in the country either by rapid mass-education or by a strict military rule until the time the communal flames are put down once for ever. It should be such a thorough work that no individual intriguing from behind, no organised group or groups, can wreck the internal peace, which is indispensable both for the economic development and for the constructive nation-building task.

Fatima : I have come across both Hindus and Muslims, who have despaired of Hindu-Muslim unity. How do you propose to effect this so-much-needed unity ?

Bharat : There are two ways ; the Gandhian way or Subhas Bosian way. The former is the method of the prophets and utopian idealists, which may or may not produce the desired results among the ordinary citizens. The other method is the one propounded by Nicolo Machiavilli, which is the only practical solution to the communal problem in India. In either way the problem is to be solved. Whether it is the doctrine of the sword or spirit, we need bring about the Hindu-Muslim unity on a permanent basis. There are hooligans, disturbers of public peace, vested interests and wire-pullers, who will utilise the frenzied mob to achieve their own selfish ends.

Fatima : What you say is right. The monied class in India, the princes and zamindars, the big businessmen and capitalists are all heartless. They wouldnt have the least scruple to plunge the entire country even into a civil war, if only in that way they could add millions to their bank balance. The history of the last two wars prove the dictum of Karl Marx that, in a capitalist world, every generation has to face one or more world wars. The capitalists are one class everywhere. Any attempt to compromise with the eternal thesis of the dictatorship of the proletariat has proved to be abortive. The Indian capitalist class are of the same descend from those blood-suckers, opportunists and raketees, that have always thrived in the country at all times. In fact, I feel, the solution of the communal problem is intimately connected with

the problem of these monied classes in India who can excite classes against classes and communities with their money. Money is power in practical polities. Have they not thrown the entire city of Calcutta again out of gear and plunged this premier city of India once again into the law of the jungle ? Gandhiji's fast will not melt the heart of Mammon. They will worship Gandhiji if that suits their purpose. They will kill him, if their money is in danger. If the Marvaries become the Jews of India our country will die. Their nationalism and idealism are often but masks to cover up their greed and lust for power. A socialist India will fight them, if the capitalists get hardened in their heartless jewry and subordinate the interests of the nation to their own jewelled and monied palaces.

Bharat : The rerudescence of troubles in Calcutta, engineered by a handful financiers and goondas, has proved one thing. Mere peace committees and emotional upheavels cannot be sufficient guarantee for a stable life in a civilised society. Gandhiji's fast is prophet-like, but unstatesmanlike. Hard stones will not be melted by sacrificial offerings. Heart intent upon money is the ugliest incarnation of devil on earth. The common men of India, both Hindus and Moslems, should fight them. We will win, for it is the common man that matters in a republic, not a few capitalists and parasites. It is the security, ordered growth and stability which the Government should guarantee, not the thrones of gold and diamonds of the leisured idlers.

Fatima : I feel that slowly, but surely, our people should be raised to intellectual heights, so that intelligently they may live their respective faiths. Neither totalitarian Government machinery, nor highly developed mechanical civilisation, can really give the bread of life which the heart of peoples pants for. We need, education, study, reflection, thought. To think is the greatest power on earth. To think is power ; to will is power. We need strong wills and enlightened minds in our up-hill march, in building up this country of ours, this wonderland of ours, this *Hindustan hamara*.

Bharat : Yes, often I have thought that the people should be made to think and understand fully their own respective faiths, which they will gain only when that broad and intelligent tolleration towards, and appreciation of, other faiths come. I personally

attach the greatest importance to a living faith of the *homo sapiens*, which is indispensable for him to journey along this sea of life. My own religion, I mean, the neo-Vedantic Hinduism, I value most and I stick to that faith. The spirit of Indo-Aryans is as infinite as the sky or this universe. I believe that the nations of the world and the Semitic religions have to learn much from the religious literature of India, as we have, in our turn, much to learn from the West.

Now, listen, Fatima; you don't mind me asking you a question, do you? I have been wondering how a Muslim girl like you could have such catholic and universalist views as you hold now? I have never believed for a moment that one can be a member of any Semitic religion, and, at the same time, be as catholic as one belonging to that of an Aryan religion. The catholicity of Vedantic Hinduism is known throughout the world; but your universalist sympathy astounds me. If you tell your coreligionists and my compatriots what your Islam teaches you, then, Hindu-Muslim unity is an achieved fact, not only enforced through the martial law or the legislations of the State, not through sheer expediency to secure material advantages, but born out of the sheer force of conviction.

Fatima : Why, Bharat? Are there no bigots and sectarians and fanatics among the Hindus? Look at the recrudescence of troubles in Calcutta, engineered, this time, by the Hindus, for which Mahatma Gandhi fasted until "sanity returned to Calcutta". It's all human problem, my friend. But I agree with you that Aryavartian religions are, by their very nature, far more catholic, universalist, humanistic and rational, than the Semitic groups of religions. Although I am born of Muslim parents, now I have no religious label at all. I keep my eyes open and receive light from any side it comes. I do not care who says, but only to what is being said. Only the intrinsic merit of the doctrine I consider. If there is any spiritual affiliation which is mine, as you say neo-Vedantism is yours, that is neo-Sufism.

Bharat : O I have been thirsting to hear something about the Sufi branch of Islam, which fascinates me. Do, please tell me more about it. O tell me all you know about Islam and Sufism, as that can bridge the gulf between Hindus and Muslims in an intelligent way on the deeper levels of human consciousness.

Fatima : O seraphic light from heaven come. O divine Sophia descend. O sweet Saraswati inspire.

Then Fatiima holding the right hand of Bharat in hers, and looking up to the skies, to the stars, she began :

THE MISSION OF MOHAMMED

The divine mission of the Prophet of Islam was to arouse Arabia of his time, to rise in revolt against idolatry and to turn to the only true God of all religions and of all prophets. At the time Mohammed came to the scenes of history Christianity grew idolatrous and polytheistic. The stern monotheism that we find in the utterances of the Prophets of Israel, we hear re-filtering and reverberating through the mouth of the prophet of Arabia. God is one. He is jealous of His name and glory. To worship any other God other than the one revealed by Mohammad, or the prophets who preceeded him, was the sin of sins. Not only the idolaters, but also Christians, said Mohammed, are guilty of this sin, those Christians, who say that "God is the Messia, the son of Mary". Mohammed, as an able politician, saw clearly and weighed the evils resulting from the idol worship, the worship of saints, of the Virgin, of relics and shrines. Although his uncompromising opposition against the idol worship made Islam lose its Raphael and Michel Angelo, its Raffaello, its Blessed Angelico and Giotto, it enabled him to free the minds of his followers from prostrating to base and lower forms of religious worship in lieu of adoring and worshipping the only God of our hearts, the Spiritual Reality of the universe.

But the God of Mohammed was decidedly the God of the Old Testament. In the revelations he received in Medina he denounces and vehemently criticises the idea of those Christians, who say that "God is the third of the three". There is only one Supreme Power to which all men are invited by Mohammed to submit themselves, and in this submission to the will of God, the central teaching of Islam consists. It was left to the Shai school, to the Muslim Sufis, to expand the notion of God from any book-bound sense to the vital living experience of the individual souls of the Supreme Reality. Even God of the orthodox Mohammadens is that simple, ingenuous God of wrath and "of the day of vengeance." God sent His prophet to announce to the people that His terrible

day of anger is imminent, if the people do not repent of their sins, and accept the faith of Islam, preached by His great prophet, Mohammed. Moses and Jesus and others were all sent by God ; but their followers strayed far away from the purity of faith ; and it was the mission of Mohammed to restore the pure faith to the world. "No other prophets were sent before thee, to whom I have not revealed that there is no other God besides me", said God to Mohammed.

When Mohammed insisted that he did not receive his doctrine from any other source other than by direct revelation, he only meant that what he received from the Jewish and the Christian sources were worked out in his mind, and became a new motive force to bring forth a new world-religion, and also a new officialdom for the spread of the inner truth and deeper reality in Islam itself and in all world-religions. For what is greater barrier to the knowledge and appreciation of the Sufis but the official and traditional book-bound and prophet-centering forms and interpretations of Islam itself ? Who were the greatest enemies of Jesus and His message but the Pharisees, the orthodox and traditional priests of Judaism ? Who burnt, exiled or tortured, some of the best specimens of sanctity and wisdom among the Christians but the organised and traditional orthodoxy ? Are not religions themselves the greatest obstacles for the Religion of Man ? What, then, a levelling down of religions ? No, not all. But a unity through religions and the recognition of the Religion of Man at the root of many religions of men. A unifying force through religions, a harmony of religions and a fellow-felling and spiritual fellowship through religion. That is what is sorely needed in the world of to-day.

Also St. Paul insisted that his doctrine was not received "either from men or by men, but through the revelation of Jesus Christ". Yet we know that many of his ideas he received from the Greek and Jewish sources. But all of them were filtered and revivified through the peculiar idiosyncrasy and mystical experiences of Paul. Christianity which he preached was Pauline Christianity and the religious personality of Paul cannot be squeezed into any other brain. What is lasting in the teaching and revelations of St. Paul ? All that springs from and constitutes the Religion of Man, the seed of perennial catholicity.

Is it not for the simple insufficiency of the inveterate theories on devils, angels, miracles and prophecies, that mysticism arose from the heart of Islam's orthodoxy and won a decisive victory, and became the living force in Islam and the unifying link among religions? There is an invisible infinite power hidden within us, rising above the levels of our transient impressions and susceptibilities, and seeking a worthy tabernacle within the heart of man. Affirmation of oneself involves affirmation and faith in God; for it is this infinite power that spurs us on towards first dreaming and then realising an infinite ideal. Man is born for infinity and there can be no rest for us but in the vision and realisation of the infinite. Infinity means living without limits, and it is the constant occupation and aim of the religious man to get freed from entanglements and to approach and touch; to taste and relish, the highest ideal humanity can ever conceive of, the ideal of Man, which religiously and reverentially we call 'God'.

Let none think that I am advocating a kind of classical humanism or a scientific and critical religion to displace the old religions. No, neither classical humanism nor scientific religion can by any means be substitutes for the mystical experience and God-touch in the soul of a religious man. This religious experience whether it is in Islam, in Christianity or in Hinduism, is essentially one in substance, many in expressions and manifestations. Is it not the same sun that shines above the deserts of Sahara or Thar, over the beautiful hills and mounts of Italy and Switzerland, over the grassy green meadows of England and the olive-groves of Spain and the forest-shades of Germany? Yet what a difference in the degree of heat and light in these various places, although the shining sun is the same throughout!

I do not find any need to speak about the orthodox and official forms of Islam; what its history has been, what the legacy of Islam is, and what prospects lie ahead of it. All these have been treated in a more exhaustive way by the competent scholars and savants. But I should speak something more about the Sufi branch of Islam, for that, to my mind, represents all that is lasting and universal in the message of Islam. It is not bound on any side either by books or by prophets; it is as spacious as the blue sky you contemplate on a bright summer day. This discourse is but a humble approach to enable us to see the unity of mankind through

religion, and may I return to that central point, running away from the deserts and wilderness of crystallized dogmatism and impoverished orthodoxy in religions?

MYSTICAL ISLAM

Philosophy mainly relies on reasoning ; religion on emotion ; and mysticism is a happy blending of both reason and emotion in the best way possible, in the highest degree possible. It is the same philosophy that is at work ; but made living and appealing by the play of emotions in a most refined and subtle way, in the purest and divinest way possible. The same religion is there ; but elevated and sublimated by the intimate and immediate touch of the soul with God, and made pleasant before men and pleasing before God. Mystical experience moves on a deeper layer of human consciousness, and all great mystics, whether of the East or of the West, whether the Sufi Muslims or Hindu Vedantists, whether German mystics or Christian sages, all speak and understand the same language.

"There is no monkery in Islam", said Mohammed. Yet monkery came out of sheer necessity and the historical Sufism begins with some recluses, who, inspired by the example of Christian monks, became ascetics and got convinced by the inner light of the God-speaking within. God is infinite and His breath is in our souls. His manifestation is creation, and His voice in inspiration. In everything that is or that appears to be finite, there is the indwelling of the Infinite, and it is this presence and essence of the Infinite in the heart of the finite, that gives value, significance, mystery, mysticism and all-in-allness to creation. We are all afloat on the shores of eternity and infinity of God.

Sufism is not pure mysticism derived from intellectual dogmatism, but mysticism springing forth from a sublimated and highly concentrated morality. The term Sufi itself, is not derived from the Greek word : *sophos*, but from the Arabic root *safi*, *saf*, which means pure, or clean. Sufism is a wisdom, but a wisdom derived from purity ; a vision of God, but a vision produced from the cleanliness of heart. Mysticism is the logical outcome of every walled and bottled organised religion. In vain an organised orthodoxy and juridically-protected dogmatism try to trample under foot, the eternal growth of Man in human hearts. Mysticism must

seek its outlets in the opposite extreme of non-boundedness, as opposed to the all-boundedness of the dogmatic orthodoxy or orthodox dogmatism of many religions.

The first Muslim monks, imitating some Christian ascetics, retired from the cares and worries of the world, wore a very coarse woolen garment (suf, from which, is probably the original word *sufi* is derived), began their lives with self-mortification, self-examination and self-control, which inevitably lead them to self-knowledge, self-purification and the consequent self-realisation.

I cannot share the view expressed by Jami and some other *sufi* and non-*Sufi* muslims that Sufism is nothing but the inner doctrine of Islam, the implicit teaching of the organ, the kernal of faith taught by the prophet of Arabia. The fact is that neither the Koran nor the prophet of Arabia taught much in common with the *Sufis*, but rather many steps lower than the high spiritual flights of the *Sufi* saints. It is not to the Kur'an nor to the prescribed legal works that the *sufis* appeal, but to the inner spirit and inner voice of God imminent in man. They knew no other religion but the religion of truth ("Haquiquat") as opposed to the religion of law and books ("Shari'at"). Sufism has grown not inside Islam, but inspite of Islam, just as St. John of the Cross and Eckhart, Tauler and St. Theresa and others mystics grew within the Church, inspite of the Church. The mystical experience usually begins only after tasting many bitter fruits of a godless and thoughtless life. Many illusions must precede the real disillusionment; many typical instances of the felt-transiency and mortality of everything under the sun must pass through the gateway of our heart. We must understand the illusory character of everything that is not God, and then only we open our eyes to the inner world that is panting for infinity within. If loneliness was once a hell to the godless man, it will become sweetness and "ineffable joy, for there can be no loneliness for one who has found his identity with All. He understands that no mortal creature, whether it be a rich father, or even a loving wife or a loving husband, children, or possessions, can possibly bestow him absolute happiness. To repeat the language of the Upanishads, the most mystical literature of the religious world : "A husband is not dear that you may love the husband ; but that you love the Self so a husband is dear. A

wife is not dear that you may love the wife, but that you love the Self, so a wife is dear. Everything is not dear that you may love everything, but that you may love the Self, so everything is dear". Now, this love of Self, has nothing or little in common with the wild and mad love, of raging and inflamed passions, which we meet with in our daily life.

Just as in the mind of St. Paul, in the mind of the author of the Fourth Gospel, and in the primitive Christianity in general, the Jewish scriptures and the Greco-Roman civilization had an harmonious blending, so in the Sufi school of thought and religious life, there was a happy meeting and mating of the Indian Vedanta philosophy on the one side and the Zoroastrian ethical system on the other. This process of slow, but deep, transformation of an outward religion to the inward life, from a legal system to the eternal spiritual religion of Man, took place within the religious community of Islam.

Sooner or later a thinking man must feel the voice of the Lord, and the infinite distance that exists between God and man is bridged by the elevation of man to become God and not by the descending of God to become man. God is nearer to us than anything else. "Verily we created man, and we know what his soul whispereth to him, for we are nearer unto him than the jugular vein"*. God is in Nature; God is behind Nature, and He is the same to every creature, and all return unto Him from whom they had their origin, in whom they have their existence and life. Our individual soul is but a ray emanated from that eternal intellect, the Over-soul, an atom of the Whole, accidentally united with the cosmic phenomena. As soon as our individual soul realises that it is that, "that thou art that", (*tatvamsi*), that "I am that" (*So'ham* of the Vedantists), then our individuality is extended as to embrace the Whole, and religion is this expansion and extension of our individual self in such a manner as to comprehend the Whole. Then our selfish desires and self-centred passions automatically vanish from our soul. We lose sight of God because of the duality of our phenomenal world. None becomes a seer unless he or she has first become a saint, for the clouds of sin obstruct our vision of Reality. It is only then we understand that our clinging to the phenomenal life is only due to our superficial vision,

* (Koran, 1.18)

superficial life, and earth-hangering thirst. Says the Adi Granth, the Bible of the Sikhs ,

"The cause of causes is the Creator.
In His hand are the order and reflection.
As He looks upon, so it becomes.
He Himself, Himself is the Lord.
Whatever is made, is according to His own pleasure.
He is far from all, and with all.
He comprehends, sees, and makes discrimination.
He himself is One, and He Himself is many.
He does not die nor perish ; He neither comes nor goes.
Nanak says : He is always contained in all".

We must live our inner law, and outside it, there is no bliss. Not in agitating, not in anger, not in gathering, not in amassing riches, not in adroit diplomacy, not in succeeding, but in living the spiritual life, in surrendering to the imperative divine oracle within, in approaching nearer and nearer to the life of God, our true happiness consists. Woe to me if ever I were to be so convinced that the purport of life consists merely in securing "decent jobs", with a happy marriage, with children and possessions, just enough to be called and classed among the few leading a decent life". This may be true, but higher truths are afloat in our mental atmosphere, and we are drawn by an irresistible force from within, to acquiesce to its, or His, promptings and inspirations, and to find out our real life even in the midst of the desert of thoughtlessness, in the wilderness of dissipation and distraction of the spirit. Our life is placed between the hammer and the anvil. If we lead a commonplace life, the "average life" of a modern man, we may be relieved from some gloomy thoughts, and desolating problems of our after-life, from struggling incessantly against the evil in the world and in us and other rough sides of the hammer. If we sink deeper into our real nature, then the only course is to abandon our selfishness with everything which that word implies. We cannot serve God and mammon at the same time. We cannot order our life in such a way as to secure the best of both the worlds, the best of the kingdom of this world and the kingdom of God. This is very clear to anyone who sails along the shores of the Semitic dualism, where there is a necessary and essential division and antagonism between earth and heaven, between the kingdom of

God and the kingdom of men, be it a state, Church or any other institution. But also in the monistic view, the same reality is felt and seen, not by way of opposition and fight, but by union and sympathy. Is there, then, any way of unifying the finite with the infinite, of harmonising the forces of Darkness with the kingdom of Light ? Yes, because there is no more finiteness when the Infinite is attained, no more the forces of Darkness when the kingdom of Light is reached.

How much pining for sheer vanities ! So much ado for mere nothingness ! Do we not spend sleepless nights and worried days of our life, in merely achieving, succeeding, gathering, accumulating, counting our hoards and dreaming about "having a good time", in doing this and doing that, most of which, if not all, are entirely disconnected with the one thing necessary for man to be seen and realised in this life ? Years and days we spent in pursuing the fleeting pleasures and imprisoning ourselves until at last, after years of gossip and idle life, of pleasure-hunting and having a "good time", we find ourselves before the threshold of death, the vestibule of an unseen beyond. The question of personal sanctification and striving after something that will quench in some way our higher aspirations, is common to all saints and seers in all religions. I know the great bulk of humanity tread their short span of life from the cradle to the grave with no further thought than their immediate present, usually limited to eating, sleeping, having a good time, and to being tolerably well. From this misery of thoughtless life, they pass on to the heart-enslaving and soul-sickening desires and passions, which to possess and satisfy is their esteemed happiness, which to lose is their supposed unhappiness and real misery.

SUFI SAINTS

What a painful and miserable plight when I abandoned my heart to follow inwardly the world-currents of spiritual blindness and spiritual death ! Our innermost is an infinite abyss of enlightenment and life, which, however, remain clouded by an immense variety of passions, desires, emotions, pleasure-thirsts, and everything else that make us remain captive in the realm of the phenomenal World. I try to gather and squander, possess and lose ; but my gatherings and possessions do not enrich my soul.

Why do I spend time in adorning my body, which, like a blossomed flower, withereth away and die tomorrow? The cup of illusion, the cup of mortality is briinfull and we pant for redemption. Millions do not worry about their spiritual life, because few are the thinking men in this world. After searching for cups of bliss in all the corners of human life, all my past experience and reflection have taught me this : I must abandon myself, to find out my Real Self; I must quit myself to approach the Lord who reigns within my heart. The kingdom of God lies within us.

Bayazid, a sufi, says. "The truth, most High" (Al haqq), I saw in a dream. Truth said to him : "What do you desire?" Bayazid replied : "I desire what Thou desirest". Truth said : "I am to Thee as thou art to Me". On another night, Bayazid beheld in a dream the Eternal Truth. Of whom he asked : "What is the way to Thee?" And Truth replied : "Quit thy self and thou will attain me".

Manzur who said : "I am the Truth" was charged with heresy, and was put to death at Bagdad in 309 A.H. The orthodox Mohammadens asked Al Hallaj to say : "He (God) is the Truth", instead of saying "I am the truth". Hallaj replied : "Verily He is all in all, and yet you say He is lost in me. Nay, Hussain is lost in Him. The circumfluent ocean is not lost and never decreases". He defined a poor man or a fakir, as one "who dispenses with what is beside God, and looks to Him alone". A true Sufi is defined as one "who knows one person, and One Person knows him".

Mysticism is the highest pitch of religion, and the ordinary dogmatism and liturgism of the organised religions are but a sham show of the real religion. "Whosoever worships God by the light of ordinary religion is as one who seeks the sun by the light of the stars", said Hallaj. Before his death Al Hallaj exclaimed : "My friend is not guilty of injuring me ; he gives me to drink what, as master of the feast, he drinks himself. When he passes me the cup he invites to me to taste sword and block, like one who drinks old wine mixed with dragonswort". His last words were : "The counting of Unity makes numbers (or plurality) out of Unity".

Rabia of Basra (a saint, who lived in the second century of the Hijira), is one among the sweetest specimens of the Sufi mysticism. Once three holy men went to visit her. The topic of conversation turned to sincerity (Sidiq). One among them said :

"He is not sincere who does not patiently bear the blows of the Lord". Rabia replied : "That saying smells of egotism". Another said : "He is not sincere who does not patiently endure the blows of his Lord." Rabia added : "A better saying I know and it is : He is not sincere who does not forget the pain of the blows in his joy at beholding the face of his Lord". When she was asked whether she wished to marry, the angel saint replied : "The bonds of wedlock have descended upon me, I am not my own but my Lord's, and must not be unfaithful to Him". She used to spend some of her morning hours in meditating and contemplating upon the Lord, and when she was asked by others about her silent prayerful hours, she used to reply ; "The daybreak slowly opens in the East ; the lovers are wooing their beloved in their secret chambers ; and I am waiting to see the face of my Lord". Hasan of Basr asked her : "How do you know the Lord ?". She replied : "You know Him as such and such, I as non-such". Once while joining the pilgrims to Mecca and seeing the Ka'ba, she exclaimed : "Here I see nothing but bricks and a house of stone, what do they profit me ? 'Tis Thou that I want, O Lord". Names and forms mean nothing ; what is really worthwhile and profitable for each one of us, is to redeem ourselves, to be fully self-realised in the Lord of the universe. Overlording human hearts.

I have always felt a secret strength, an untold joy, an inexpressible exultation, at the thought that we shall be, if we will, on the side of those few saints who, abandoning the fleeting pleasure and deceptive illusions, have consecrated their precious life, in pursuing a great ideal, the ideal of Man. If I join hands with the thoughtless millions, I may enjoy some of the pastime amusements and common enjoyments, but I lose sight of the lasting joy, that permanent Reality, that unfading comradeship with all the truth-seeking souls who have preceeded us, and who shall come after us. All that the world esteems as happiness and fullness of our personality, are simply nothing for the saints of God, for the vision they see before their spirit is simply without any limit, without the extortions of misery and death, without the least sham happiness or enjoyments from without. The saints of all religions have known God, and pure scholars and savants have never approached to such an eminent and living knowledge and experience of God as the saints and mystics have done. Tagliratul-Auliya, the great Maham-

madan canonist, tells us how Iman Ash-Shafi once visited a convent of Sufis, and, after a long discussion with them, said : "The knowledge of the whole world did not equal the knowledge I have about God ; but my own knowledge falls short of the knowledge possessed by the Sufis". It is the experimental knowledge of God that is the basis of mysticism, and usually the experimental knowledge of God is directly opposed to the official dogmatism of the religious authorities, who, most often, stand for the defence of the vested interests and egoistic claims. Lives of the saints in all great religions are fundamentally the same ; and the variety is only in the external garb and in its non-essentials, which variety is a part of creation, as unity and harmony is the divine element in the multiplicity of beings and becomings in the cosmos.

It is the acceptance of a Supreme Being as most real and of a world entirely outside the range of sense-relish and sense-perception that constitutes the basis of faith. Without this spiritual vision and feeling of the invisible and intangible universe, real and universal love cannot be born in our hearts. "Love and faith are a mighty spell", as Jallaludin Rumi says.

Abu-I-Kahir (196—440 A.H.), after conversing with the great philosopher Avvicenna, said : "I see by spiritual intuition all that he knows". Saints are directly taught of God, by God Himself, and the distance between them and God becomes shorter and shorter, till the very duality is eclipsed in, what is called by Plotinus, ecstasy. It is our knowledge of, and clinging to, the physical world outside us that strengthen the sense of dualism in us ; and as the physical world, with the hierarchical order of things as they are, becomes one with the material world outside, we become farther removed from the spiritual world inside.

THE MIND OF MAN

Is it a loss for me, if I lose everything, and yet I am encompassed by the hands of the Lord ? "Wherever you turn, there is the face of God".* The Qur'an, the Bible, the Upanishads, and the living experience of saints, all unite to sing in chorus that the "breath of God" is in our nostrils and that our innermost is simply divine. Now that the drunkards, impure, murderous men reveal a spirit lower than that of the animal world does not alter the fact that, beyond the layers of drunkenness, sinfulness and

* Qur'an, II, 139.

Let none think that these words are a passing criticism coming from an isolated man, who had neither the will nor the opportunity to enjoy life as men of the world do. We should fully realise that "all those who are on the earth pass away, and there endureth but the Face of the Lord, the Glorious, the Bountiful"†, and that "the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever". ‡ This is quite enough to make an ordinary man consider his own position before the life riddle. If the wise and the unwise, fool and the sage, sinner and the saint, die in the same way as the brutes, that is no argument against the truth that outside virtue there is no real happiness. Virtue is its own reward.

A saint can never be beaten and is protected from every side, for he has transcended the realm of the finite. Only a part of the finite creation can be beaten. A saint, to all externals, is like other ordinary men; but from the way of his thinking and living you conclude that "his conversation is in heaven", as St. Paul would put it. He has seen the infinity of God, the infinity of his innermost self, and he has no time to while away in useless amusements, in having a "good time", in profitless pursuits. His zeal for truth and for God-realisation makes him roam across the mountains and rivers, across the seas and oceans, in living the truth, and inspiring the thinking people to hear his practical gospel and to listen to his saving message. For him every moment is to be spent under the guiding principle of the Eternal, enthroned and realised in his heart, and his temporal existence is lead completely "*sub specie æternitatis*". He lives, but not he, but God lives in Him. His mortal body, his frail members, all have become the channels of grace and enlightenment of the Most High. He is a saint, whether he belongs to Islam, Christianity, Hinduism or Buddhism. Labels are often liables.

What is tangible and verifiable in religions is the human side of it. There cannot be any Man-God higher than the ideal perfection of Man. The divinity inherent in human nature has been experienced, verified and realised by saints; but a God essentially distinct from creation, from human nature, may be a "gaseous vertebrate", as Hæckel called the antropomorphic God of

† Qur'an iv. 26 & 27.
‡ I. John II. 17.

the theologians, or a disconnected God, and hence our life remains untouched and uninfluenced by such a deity. It is this human side of life and the sacred inherence of divinity within us that is the subject of religious interest for people who have felt and experienced God within. One who wants to dogmatize the religious experience of saints and sages of God, without themselves having had that experience, try in vain to crib, cabin and confine the boundless vision of religious experience. Religion is not a matter to be codified, it is a matter to be felt and realised.

CATHOLICITY OF SUFISM

It is this human aspect that is to be stressed, not man in his phenomenal existence, but in his eternal Divinity immanent in him. From man we proceed to God, and God terminates in man. It is for this reason that mysticism in Islam and in all religions reached its climax and full activity in social life, and not in withdrawing away from the world, ending in solitary hermitage. Virtue and religion are perfected only in our social life, in our dedication and service to others. No religious experience sees the divine aspect of Reality without its human counterpart, nor can one stress the human aspect without the divine, but in one it comprehends both the infinite and the finite, the One and the Many, the eternal and the temporal, where the dualism is transcended not by an intellectual analysis, but by the union of love, by the eternal Love, God of the universe, the essence of spirituality everywhere.

"The full circle of deification must comprehend both the inward and the outward aspects of Deity—the One and the Many, the truth and the law. It is not enough to escape from all that is creaturely without entering into the eternal life of God, the Creator as manifested in His works. To abide in God (*baqa* of the Sufis), after having passed away from selfhood (*fana*), is the mark of the Perfect Man, who not only journeys to God ; i.e. passes from plurality to unity, but in and with God, i.e. continuing in the unitive state, he returns with God to the phenomenal world from which he sets out, and manifests unity in plurality. In this descent.....he brings down and displays the Truth to mankind while fulfilling the duties of the religious law".—*

Pure cold intellectualism alone is not enough ; we need the

* Nicholson. "The mystics of Islam" P. 163.

warmth of a loving heart to integrate our personality, not by losing or dissolving it, but by expanding and infinitizing it. Does not love transmute into pure gold the basic phenomenal alloy of which every creature partakes? Even if cold reason is dualistic, there is love that transcends this dualism and the consequent lower vision of Reality. It is this love of saints that makes them feel and respond to the music of the universe. The Sufis usually are very keen towards this music of life and enchantment from Nature, supported and comforted by the oriental rapture and oriental imagination that are fully alive in them.

Catholicity of religion is not learnt at the feet of the Catholic Church, but only at the feet of saints and seers of all religions. The Christian mystics have had the same experience as the Sufis of Islam and the Yogins of India. Only in the Christian churches the canonical Gestapo have not given them freedom to express so freely and so openly as in the oriental religions. The allegory is very clear among the eastern saints, even when some of the equivocal or manifestedly erotic songs are sung or listened to. D. B. Macdonald in his "Emotional religion in Islam as affected by music and singing," tells us how the mystics have reached such spiritual perfection, as not to need any further external stimulus to keep distinct what is profane and sacred, for there is an ineffable vision transcending good and evil, finite and the infinite, limited and unlimited, in that "Super-Being, Super-Good, Super-Truth", as Dionysius or Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite terms it.

It is then that we begin to understand the really universal and catholic nature of all true God-realising religions. All are but different streams and rivers, running fast into the same sea; all but different rail-roads running towards the same ideal of Perfect Man; all but different radii of the same sun, all converging towards the same point.

"Lo, for I to myself am unknown, now in God's name
what must I do ?

I adore not the Cross nor the Crescent, I am not a
Giaour nor a Jew.

East nor West, land nor sea is my home, I have kind
neither with angels nor with gnomes.

I am wrought not of fire nor of foam, I am shaped
not of dust, nor of deed.

I was born not in China afar, not in Saqsin and
 not in Bulghar ;
 Not in India, where five rivers are, nor Iraq nor
 Khorasan I grew.
 Not in this world nor that world I dwell, not in
 paradise, neither in hell ;
 Not from Eden and Rizwan I fell, not from Adam
 my lineage I drew,
 In a place beyond uttermost Place, in a tract
 without shadow or trace,
 Soul and body transcending, I live in the soul
 of my Lord, one anew".*

This text from the Sufi scriptures is a clear proof how sanctity, if sanctity, holiness, if holiness, God-realisation, if God-realisation, knows no limits of either nationality, race or creed. It must be so, for there is nothing more universal and yet more one, than God. And religion is the pathway towards that universality and unity of Godhead within our own souls.

The difficulty arises when various religions claim for themselves exclusive revealed truths, finality, or absolute value and superiority, holding the respective adherents in conscious loyalty, but unconscious thraldom to them. That is the common religious experience all throughout, and that is the common source *from which is derived or flows the ineffable* sweetness of religious experience. The religion-experiencing faculty also is fundamentally the same, and here again agreement and unity, not division and disharmony, are to be discovered. Max Müller called this common faculty for religious experience, the "Faculty of Faith", a "mental faculty or disposition, which, independent of, nay inspite of, sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the infinite under different names and under varying disguises". †

There is no final verdict about the problems of life from any side. It is simply absurd to claim absolute truth for anything, ontological or logical, in this relative universe. Philosophy and religion are in continuous travail to find out always a better vision of Reality, and they succeed but partially, because the ideal they have set forth for themselves is simply infinite. We call God, the

* Divani Shamsi Tabriz. P. 344.

† Introduction to the Science of Religion, lectures delivered in 1870, P. 13

highest perfection which man can conceive of himself. We are but the objectification of God and God is the objectification of our own selves, united and harmonised in the Universal Self of all. "We ourselves are the attributes by which we describe God. Our existence is merely an objectification of His existence. God is necessary to us in order that we may exist, which was necessary for him, in order that He may be manifested to Himself", says an authority in Sufi religion, Ibn Al, Arabi.

RELIGION AND REALITY

Popular religious have always been attacked, or simply disregarded, by the thoughtful few from the time of Socrates in the West and the Upanishads in the East. The penalty they had to pay is either risking their own life or checking or curtailing of their freedom. There are the organised religious authorities on the one side and the State on the other to apply sanction to all the thinking and independent adventurers of human thought and spiritual life. Independent thinking is the first condition to take any really progressive step towards the emancipation of man from the trammels of dogmatic religions and from the tyranny of the State machinery. Great philosophical systems and divine realisations in religious men have all come out of the heart of defiance upon everything that savours external authority, external imposition and external domination. It has been a steady slow process of human mind, traversing from the ancient cities of Athens, Benares, Rome, Carthage, down to the twentieth century life, and to arrive at the illuminating conclusions and land-marks which we all have reached through Science, Philosophy and Religion, as we understand them to-day. If the most adventurous minds have swept away even the threefold pillars of religion, namely, existence of God, liberty and immortality, that does not mean that their system is invalidated on that account. There is ebb and flow, going and returning, in the history of human thought ; but the progressive tidal waves are visible and it is this progressive law that asserts itself behind the veil of flux and reflux of human thought. "The mere fact that a theory leaves no room for freewill, pluralism, immortality or God does not make it false, even if belief in such ideas should happen to help us over the disposal places in life".* Here again, as elsewhere

* Philosophical review. XVI. P. 123, Article by Prof. Thilly.

hen a profoundly religious man does away with God by atheism ; does away with liberty by determinism and immortality by monism, only the supposed or imaginary conceptions of God, human liberty and personal immortality are set aside, opening other doors and other possibilities for a wider outlook and broader view about the same God, immortality and liberty, which he is accused of to have swept away.

"It is not for me to seek out either if gods exist, or if they do not exist. Many things hinder me from this, notably the obscurity of the subject and the shortness of human life", said Protagoras. Definition of God and the metaphysical speculations about Him are necessarily limited and conditioned by our own mental categories. Therefore God, the object of our speculations and the potentialities of our thinking subject are simply infinite. Consequently the relative truths are subject to revision and readjustment, reform and re-statement.

Diogenes compared our life to a spectacle. "Some attend it in order to participate in the contests. Others on business, he best to look on ; for it is in life. The vulgar seek 'ame and money ; but the philosophers truth."* The songs of Sufi saints or the poetry of the Upanishads, the canticles of all saints of all religions bear testimony to this fact, that truth was their sole aim in life, truth sought after, seen and lived to the best of their ability, to the full limits of their utmost possibility. "*Amicus Plato, sed magis amica veritas*", they said, which means : Plato is my friend, but Truth is a greater friend.

We all happen to be born of parents belonging to this, that or no religion. Birth means little. The vain glories of our birth and state, of our church and sects, are shadows, not substantial things. What is really worth is the independent striving after truth, its acquisition and abiding therewith. The servile religions start from some dogmatic assumptions, and a man, whether he sees it or not, must accept its dogmas and creeds, and the creed-mongers have no further preoccupation beyond the safeguarding of dogmas and the right formulation of their respective creeds. "Thus saith the Lord", is their banner. Now the Koran prescribes the Law saying : "life for life, and an eye for eye, and nose for nose, and ear for ear, and tooth for tooth, and for wounds (equal) retaliation.

* (Leartius. Proem. VIII. 16).

...They who do not judge according to the books which we have made, descended from above, are infidels."* But a seer of God, a searcher after truth, will find that he cannot comply with this prescription. That is universally true among all saints whether it is in the legal Islam or in the Church-Christianity. Now in the pages of the New Testament we have the principle of non-violence so clearly and unmistakably enunciated ; and, hence, for the Church and the State it was necessary to chase after distinctions between the council and the precept, between the ideal and the practice. Some even went on to say that the real portraits of Jesus is not that of a suffering god on the cross and praying for the persecutors, but of him who whipped away the merchants from the temple of the Jews. In other words, not that Jesus who is meek and humble of heart, the incarnation of suffering and patience, but a forged, violent and militant man just as they themselves are, I mean, many of the churchmen and statesmen, who have sold reason to serve the church-orthodoxy or state-diplomacy.

HUMANIST SUFISM

In the Sufi school of thought there is the well-known distinction between the triple ways of Law, Way and Truth in religion. Law or *Shariat* is the lowest form of religion, in which men seek after God in a blind and unintelligent way. Prophets are called in, they are adored and worshipped, dogmatized and divinised. What they taught is of absolute value and should be equally valid for all men. It is a prophet-centering and a book-bound religion. But the human spirit cannot possibly rest satisfied here. The Infinite is outside and everywhere, and hence begins a search after God, a way, 'Tarikat', towards Self-realisation. Here passions and desires are still burning in his heart, but he is not succumbing under its crushing weight, and there is a progressive march towards enlightenment and final emancipation of his spirit. The last is the final blessed state, the state of Truth, which the Sufis call 'Haqiqat'. This may be compared to the triple path, the purgative, illuminative and unitive ways of many Christian theologians. The doctrine is illustrated by the following episode.

Once a man, desirous of spiritual perfection, approached a Sufi to teach him the way to *Haqiqat*. The Sufi looking around

* (Sura. V. 49).

amidst the crowds in the city streets, sought out three men who were in the three stages of the Sufi spiritual ladder of perfection. He asked the questioner to go and strike at the first man who was an orthodox fanatical Muslim. He returned stroke for stroke, for "blow for blow and eye for eye" is the law in the Koran. The student went and struck the second man, whom the Sufi had pointed at. The man looked up and flushed as though in anger, the inferior nature, the beast within him, revolting, clenched his hands as though to strike, but reflecting upon his own spiritual law, by a conscious effort, restrained from returning the blow and showed some kind of loveliness towards the striker. The third man, hit by the student, had attained the way of Truth, and he appeared to have been entirely unconscious of the stroke, and his mind immovably fixed upon the changeless Truth, God. From the way the three men reacted to his blows, he learnt how from the Law he must come to the Way and from the Way to the Truth, if through religion he wanted and aspired after Self-realisation.

Laws enjoined by priests, dogmas imposed by churches, cannot have the real religious ideal as their aim, for God-realisation to be acquired. The only motive force for a man to go direct to the goal of all religions is the inward light, the God-speaking within, whose voice and conviction are beyond every shadow of doubt. Whether there is a commandment from God or not, whether there is an eternal hell or not, whether the church-moralists approve it or not, passion will assert itself while youth and beauty are raging within our limbs. Youth will continue to contemplate youth, love communing with love, desire enkindling desire, and if there is any way out for the emancipation of the spirit, that way is only that of inner conviction and clear vision by which we see that right is right, and that not in selfishness but in selflessness our happiness and true enjoyment consist.

Human nature is fundamentally good and not evil. There is no original sin, but only original sanctity embedded within us. Its manifestation, however, does not take place until we have cleared of all the useless bracken and noxious weeds from our hearts. This can never take place by any sort of revelation coming from outside, whether it be from God, or from an 'angel'; from any God-incarnate or from any authorised prophet. Do you

not see before your very eyes the law of human nature manifesting itself in various ways, in human life in general, and during youth in particular ? The fire of passion is there ; the enkindled heart is there, the soul inflamed by desires is there. From that state there is no recovery, no remedy, no salvation; unless through another fire, another flame, which will counteract the first and replace it with an all-consuming fire. This fire that has filled the hearts of all great saints is called, in religious language, "divine love", in psychological language, "Self-realisation", and in philosophical language it is called "perfection of man, spiritual perfection". Virtue, good life, moral perfection etc. are again mere words connoting the same truth. Sin, evil life, immorality, again show the opposite current in man, the current that drags us to self-seeking, self-indulgence, at the expense of the realisation of our Real Self, the Self of the universe, the Lord and God of all.

The best lyrics have come out of the lips and pens of those who have lived to the fullest the life of religion. I know the term "religion" is always equivocal, for it usually brings to our mind the notion of an organised religion, with a central authority, with revealed scriptures, creeds, ordained priesthood etc. which are all but the shells protecting or detecting the kernel. But religion could be protected and detected without all those paraphernalia, for God Himself is our very innermost. The nearer we approach Him, the greater is the expanding of our personality. Our perfection essentially consists in this onward-move towards the ideal perfection of Man.

All possible ways of approach towards God are considered, and, although religions are many, Religion is asserted to be one. "The ways unto God are as the number of the breaths of the sons of men", says a Sufi aphorism. Every object in every religion, whether more true or less true, can teach something about God-realisation to them who have eyes to see, ears to hear, and minds to meditate. All the struggles and strife of men and women under the sun are all implicitly or explicitly directed towards the finding of, and communing with, the same Friend. The Beloved of all great souls is one, although lovers and wooers, courtiers and courtisans are many. The arch of the eyebrow, the dimpled chin, the rosy cheeks, the dark tresses, the wine, the cup,

the sun, moon and the stars, all proclaim the same truth, and invite men of reflection and selflessness towards the same goal. "All this turmoil and strife in the world are from love of Him ; it hath now become known that the fountain-head of the strife is One", says Hafiz.. God is Krishna, souls are Radhas.

Human love is symbolic and represents a forceful image of the divine love. If the self-love freezes and fetters and limits our hearts, the divine love warms up, heightens and expands our hearts and minds even unto infinity.

Hafiz, one of the greatest of Persian Sufi poets, tells us how he found God in everything and everywhere, amongst all creeds and conditions of men. To a Christian, who has not found the way to unity and harmony, he asks : "How long will you miss the way to unity ? How long will you place the stigma of the Trinity on the One" ?

One who is touched by the sense of the Infinite must necessarily feel and see infinity everywhere, even in this world of apparent limitations. Although the wise can discern God and religion in temples and shrines, for the common people they become an occasion for fetishism, idol worship, and other lower forms of religions fondled by men.

"Idol-temple and Ka'la are alike the house of worship ;
The ringing of the (Church) bell is the hymn of worship ;
Girdle and Church, Rosary and Crucifix,
Are all in truth the tokens of worship."—Umar Khayyam.

If idol worship is a negation of religion for the vast majority of mankind, it can aid the purpose of religion for the thinking few, so that even from paganism we can learn much truth.

"If the Musulman understood what the idol (really) was,
He would know that there was true religion in idolatry (as well)."—Mohammed of Shabistar.

What substantiates the religion of the Sufis, and of the mystics of all religions, is indeed love, life in love, which, is another definition of religion.

"Happy the moment when we are seated in the palace,
thou and I,

With two forms and with two figures but with one soul,
thou and I".—This was written by Jallauddin Rumi, in his

Masnavi; the mine of mysticism not only for the Muhammadien Sufis, but for all saints of God.

The love of our soul with the Soul of the universe, of our All with the Whole of the universe, is so much and so intensified that the distinction between 'I' and 'thou' is lost, and man becomes the mirror of God.

"Betwixt me and Thee there lingers an 'it is I' that
torments me.

Ah, by Thy grace, take away this 'I' from between us !

I am He whom I love, and He whom I love is I,

We are two spirits dwelling in one body.

If thou seest me, thou seest Him,

And if thou seest Him, thou seest us both".—song of Al Hallaj.

The parallel text in the pages of the New testament is the following : "Philip saith unto him : 'show us thy Father ; and it sufficeth us'. Jesus saith unto him : 'I have been so long time with you, and yet thou hast not known me, Philip ? He that hath seen me hath seen the Father ; and how sayest thou, show us the Father ? Believest thou not that I am in the Father, and the Father in me ? The words I speak not of myself : but the Father, that dwelleth in me, he doeth the works'".*

Bayazid said : "For thirty years a transcendent God was my mirror. But now onwards I have no other mirror but myself, no other God besides my deepest Self".

Christ called the same experience, "oneness with the Father". In the language of the Sufis the same ideal is expressed as the "union with the Beloved". God is simply infinite in many mystical forms of religion ; but limited and distorted in all forms of the dogmatic religions. God is revealed in every form, and all religions, great or small, found in the pages of history or not, are but pathways to God.

"My heart is capable of every form :
A cloister for the monk, a faerie for idols,
A pasture for gazelles, the votary's Ka'ba,
The tables of the Torah, the Koran.
Love is the faith I hold, : wherever turn
His camels, still the one true Faith is mine."—

Ibnu 'I-' Arabi.

* (John, XIV, 8-10).

The saints of God are really theoducts, all taught of God, by God Himself. In that sweet solitude, when the worries of finite creation are forgotten and our hearts enter into the depths of ineffable sweetness of God and divine truths, then it is that we understand how universal love is the essence of the Universal Being that pervades, interpenetrates, everywhere and everything. Then a key is given to us that will open every closed bar or mysterious lock of the universe, and we have then enough of inner light and inner comfort to continue our journey onward, towards our fullest and deepest Self-realisation. The dreamworld of a 'visionary' which we kept looking from afar, becomes more and more real, till at last our hearts and minds are fully vivified, enlivened and deified from within and from without. All that our hearts desire is found there, for we have entered into the conscious communion with the Life of the cosmos. In knowledge, love and virtue we are made perfect in, and with, the life of God, our own Real Self, and our own ideal personality. Until the sun of boundless love has taken possession of our hearts, until the clouds of passion and self-indulging lust have vanished away from our hearts, there is no mystical way, no God-experience, no Self-realisation. But this must be a spontaneous growth from within, from inner conviction, not anything to be imposed by any authority, divine or human, religious or political.

"The word 'compulsion' makes me impatient for Love's sake;
 'Tis only he who loves not that is fettered by 'compulsion'.
 This is communion with God, not 'compulsion',
 The shining of a moon, not a cloud ;
 Or if it be 'compulsion', it is not ordinary compulsion,
 It is not the compulsion of self-will inciting us to sin."—Rumi.

PRAYER

God of my heart, Reality of my being, Permanence of my becoming, fullness of my life, bid thy radiant rays to descend from Thy throne, from above, and my I be in eternal love with you, my Love for now, for ever.

Thee I have not sought hitherto ; but a gentle ray came from above whispering the saving message, that my life is in full love with Thee, in tune with thy music.

I was enchain'd hitherto; and my new-fledged wings are growing in order that I may fly, soar and reach Thy eternal mansions, in untold magnificence and undecaying beauty.

My heart sings and sighs after Beauty, and when thy image in creation fades and falls away every moment, unto Thee my eyes were raised, and my heart is eternally anchored at the eternal beauty and divinity of Thy Being.

Every creature, a sweet smelling flower, the angelic face of a little child, the toils, worries and struggles of men and women, all are but childish plays of men before the shoreless sea of Life, fullness of Thy life, my Lord, my God.

In the twinkling of an eye, the world we appraised so much, the pleasures we hunted for with so much hankering, all are lost, when our tiny speck of consciousness is eclipsed on the surface of the sea of life, behind the veil of Death.

Does a newly born babe, does a human being below three, see or know or feel anything about the world in which statesmen, churchmen, critics, philosophers, ordinary people, all are immersed in? All again, although are or seem to be important, are but plays of little children on the shores of time-space-less eternity of the immortal God, the Reality Supreme.

All along the pasture fields I walked in deep communion with the mute creation, and I heard within my heart a cry, a saying, a song that said: "Arouse thyself and enter into the heart of the lion of Divinity asleep within you". I awoke, and to my great surprise I found that the abyss of the human heart is infinite and unfathomable, for it is the throne, the living temple of Eternal God, nay God Himself.

God, if God, must be All. My Self, if Self, must be All. Do we not feel and know in our better moments that Infinite we are and towards Infinity we aspire? Does not our restlessness in everything finite clearly show that we are not parts but the whole of the Infinite, and as such, not distinct from, nor subordinated to, but one with the One Reality, reigning without a second, the Absolute Lord unrivalled by the relative universe, the Supreme Reality, not encompassed by the phenomenal appearance?

From the heart of Infinity we are all born, and like the pelican of the ancient legends, we are fed by its own life-blood, the Infinite; and until we have reached the life and light of the

Infinite, we become again little children, playing with our paper-boats on the sea-shores and with the hollows of the hands trying to empty out the ocean, and nothing more.

Yet Thou, O God of our being, Soul of our souls, Life of our lives, delightest in our childish plays, and we are thereby comforted. Before the awe, majesty and mystery of the Infinite pervading us, man is always a perpetual child, and his childishness never ends until he has been touched by the rays of the Infinite, has been drawn thither, and is made one with the One that is without a second.

Gather from all the four winds and corners of the earth them, to whom Thy infinite ray has reached, and have been thereby purified ; and as Thou art one and only one, so make us all share in Thy unity, that unity without which neither plurality nor multiplicity in the universe can ever exist.

Forgetful of our Divine Nature, mindful alone of our humanity, we miss the ladder that leads towards Thee. Of the city of the sun we are messengers and rays ; yet, messageless and rayless we all roam about in this mortal world !

Lead us, Father, to that divine unity, to that one divinity, which alone is real, life-giving and religious in this world. For none has ever reached Thee save those who tread the pathway of higher truth and universal love. Lead us all, we beseech Thee, hasten our redemption, in finding our unity and identity with Thee !

Thus finished the grand whisper of Fatima into Bharat's ears, the song on Sufi Islam.

Both of them kept quite for a while.

Bharat then sighed deeply.

Fatima : What a deep sigh ! What are you thinking, Bharat ? Come along, tell me.

Bharat : Nothing. I have been dreaming of India where a true and lasting wedding will take place between the cultural heritage of Hindus and the spiritual treasures of Sufi Islam. I fancy that such a union will beat even the dream of the Emperor Akbar the Great. In the Mughal period, even at its best, the blending of the twin cultures was not complete. Saikh Salim Chisti inspired the Asoka of the Mughal Empire, to break away from the fetters of the official Islam. Yet both his Fathepur

Sikri and Din Ilahi ideals fell short of that catholicity and deep spirituality to which we are accustomed today. The architecture during the Mughal period still contained germs of superiority of the Muslim conquerors over the Indian culture. But the Muslims slowly became indigenous plants, children of the soil, unlike the British imperialists, who always remained aloof, as encaged birds and exotic plants, in India.

Fatima : India, *par excellence* the land of catholicity, I feel sure, will make the greatest synthesis of thought between the various cultures that have come to her shores. Now there is the challenge of the Western civilisation, and I have not the least doubt that India will emerge out enriched and more universalised than ever with this wonderful contact with the West. I want the Hindu-Muslim unity on an intellectual plane, which is the only lasting bond between various religions and creeds. Ideas are born of mind. Ideas are the real strength to a human being. Ideas have legs. Ideas mean power, invincibility and immortality.

The day was breaking in the East. The sky was purple red as the first rays began to greet the enchanting town of Shillong and the young couple were seated at the top of the Shillong Peak.

After the night's talk, they sat for a while in a reflecting mood, as if absorbed in living communion with the Life of the universe.

As the clock struck seven, the two idealists bade good-bye to the tree that gave them shelter for the night, and left the place.

CHAPTER III

FOOD CLOTHING AND SHELTER

Fatima and Bharat walked along towards the town of Shillong and from there walked to a place called Moflong, and from Moflong to Cherra Pungi, where 460 inches of the annual rainfall is the highest in the world. The maternal system existing among the Khasias has practically reduced the menslok to a sort of beasts of burden. Studying the social conditions of the peoples, Fatima discovered that the womenfolk up there were free and independent. Then turning towards Bharat, Fatima said : The subjection and humiliation which you menfolk have imposed upon women, down in the vast planes of India, the slavery of the purdha and the veil, is now expiated for when I see the freedom and authority of the womenfolk up here.

Bharat : You may be sure that the womenfolk will be emancipated in Free India that is rising up in the democratic horizon of the brave new world.

As the ideal son and daughter of Hindustan stood looking at the deep and picturesque gorge at Moflong, there came a beggar girl asking for alms. Her hair was curly with a rippling smile on her round face. She was an incarnation of innocence and beauty. She was begging with her outstretched arms, although she was the queen of Creation, the nymph of the Khasi Hills. When Fatima asked her about her parentage and whereabouts, she answered, she sang :

Who my parents are I know not, my lady fair ;
But Heaven fondless me ; of those bright skies the lyre,
The playing flute, I am. Music of Heaven I give
To men who tread on earth, unawares of their celestial descend ;
Who have'nt felt the thrill and call of their Motherland,
This vast land of ours, this Aryavarta, this *Hindustan hamara*.
Many a birth, forsooth, have I passed ;
In vain have I gone in search of the builder
Of this mortal frame I bear around me, as Buddha of old.
But right here the ray of light caine. Now my mind is clear.
Not many words I want to say to you, young friends,
An angel of God I am to give His light to the needy ones. ,

This, then, is the alms I beg of you, do give it unto me,
 Go to the planes of Hindustan and strive to establish the *dharma*,
 The religion of bread, butter, clothing and shelter,
 And announce the Socialist Gospel to this land of our birth
 and love.

So saying, the Urvasi walked back and vanished into the thick woods that grew luxuriant in and around the Moflong gorge. Her presence was so dazzling, her words so powerful, yet gentle and sweet, that the divine couples did not dare to ask her to stop and tell them more about herself. Bharat and Fatima, at slow pace, walked around, repeating to themselves these words : "Go to the planes of Hindustan and strive to establish this *dharma*, the religion of bread and butter, clothing and shelter, and announce aloud the Socialist Gospel to this land of our birth and love".

Bharat : To fulfil this grand ideal of preaching the religion of bread and butter, of clothing and shelter, to announce the Socialist Gospel to this land of our birth and love will then be my aim in life hereafter. All great cultures and civilizations, I know, have been raised on this trinity : food, clothing and shelter. India's immediate need is this grand Socialist gospel, but not in its naked crude form, as in many superficial Socialist brains of today, but in its deep and integrated form, as in the exemplified life of the great leaders and prophets like Marx, Lenin, Trotsky and Stalin in the modern age, of Plato, Socrates, Jesus, Buddha and others in the bygone days.

Fatima : In the prime of youth, when blood runs swifter and warmer, when the mental faculties grow and develop, we need consecrate ourselves to something grand and great. Great ideals are for great souls. The common man and woman everywhere rest satisfied with marriage, children, family, some money, name or fame. But the divine high-souled humans soar to the summits of an idealistic life. Theirs is an ever-growing vision and never-ending inspiration. They are the thoughtful few, the prophetic and self-purified few, who are the leaven of the earth, "the salt of the earth and the light of the world", as Jesus said. We should embark upon this pioneering work, this enterprize, this inspiring and grand ideal.

Bharat : So, now, for you and me there shall no more be any greater ideal than to work silently and persistently for the

constructive building up of our country on the Socialist lines. As Gandhiji, after returning from South Africa, undertook to go on foot to the Indian villages to study the situation on the spot, so, I think, we should also go out, you in your own way and I in mine, to study India better. Later, when we meet, we will exchange notes, which may help us to clarify our minds, and perhaps those young men and women, the future builders of India, the brave architects of the greater Mother India, who are sailing along with us in the same boat.

Fatima and Bharat continued discussing and planning their proposed all-India tour. Two days after, they left Khasi Hills. Fatima and Bharat came down to Calcutta and the next day one took the train to Madras and the other to Delhi.

ECONOMIC RESOURCES

As was previously arranged, Bharat and Fatima met after some time to exchange their notes. They met in the holy city of Benares, some three miles off from the great educational institution of Pandit Madhan Mohan Malaviya, the Benares Hindu University.

Bharat said :

Many a town and village have I gone through in this land
 Where the womenfolk are meek and graceful, menfolk thoughtful,
 Yet all gripped within the clutches of grim poverty.
 Indian womenfolk, I discover, is the biggest asset of our Nation.
 Sarees it would be a crime to get exchanged with western frocks.
 Indian sarees, pygamas and dhoties, all I found to be poor
 From the Kashmir blonds and the Himalayan and the Hills tribals
 To Ramnad and Tinnevelly in the South and the raging seas.
 Scenes have I seen, heart-rending to narrate.....
 Misery have I seen in all its nakedness. A spate,
 A huge futility, an incredible waste, I found.
 I was ne'er.....

Fatima : Bharat, pardon me. I am so much interested in what you say. But please don't mix up poetry with these hard and too prosaic realities of life. Do please tell me in simple words what you have experienced during your tours.

Bharat : You are right. In fact, I see I have to make conscious efforts to make poetry now. No genuine poetry or

artistic creation, can be the fruit of conscious efforts. Thank you for taking me out of this tangled labyrinth I was entering into.

Everywhere I found the exquisite beauty and riches of our land, on the one side, and poverty, misery, and helplessness of the common citizen, on the other. Most of the villagers, even in the midst of their grinding poverty, received me with great kindness and hospitality. They have a heart as warm as that of a woman, a loving smile so sweet as that of a sweetheart. O I began to love their misery and poverty too, if, though plunged into the depths of untold sufferings, they could keep their natural and ancient soul unsullied, unlike most gentlemen and ladies living in big cities. In the villages I discovered the Gandhian truth to my greatest satisfaction, that the resurrection of India should come from her seven hundred thousand villages scattered throughout the land. The city civilization, if allowed to grow without its corresponding growth in the national life of India and the natural soul of the human being, is death-bearing. The salvation of India, I am convinced, should come from her villages. Even if India were to be highly industrialised, as I believe she should, over eighty per cent of her population should still remain peasants. India's village reconstruction, I think, is the crying need, and ranks as one of the first items in the nation-building task in free India.

There is pleasant climate, fresh air and gentle breeze everywhere in India through most part of the year, and in some parts of India always. If only our people are taught how to breathe fresh air with open lungs most of their physical ailments could be remedied. Modern scientific research has clearly demonstrated that even phthisis could be cured by right breathing. From the air and the rich sun in India we can extract most of the vitaminal substances for our life. From air is extracted Nitrogen, from Nitrogen is produced Nitrolin. From blowing winds much energy and power could be harnessed, not only for the country wind mills, but also for moving big machines. Health and life, both physical and mental, are found in fresh air, bright sunlight, clean earth and pure water. Half of the miseries of our people could be removed by teaching them to live as close and as near as they can to Nature. To breath nearer and lie closer to the lap of the Mother Nature means to lead a healthier life. The problem of food, clothing and shelter comes only after teaching our people to live a more natural

life and to make use, to the fullest extent, the inexhaustible riches lavished by Nature on India in the way of wonderful climate, fresh air, gentle breeze, bright sunshine and pure water.

More than three quarters of our country is available for cultivation of all the food we need for life. Of these cultivable parts of India just over one fifth, about 115 millions acres of land, are already cultivated by Nature. This immense area is covered with forests, thick woods and rich pasture lands. We need not work ; the Mother Nature is working there for us. All that we need is to go there, cut the needed quantity of firewoods or send our cattle there to graze. If and when a Socialist Government come at the Centre, as I hope it will,—as the only other alternative is national suicide,—the primary concern should be to speed up the work of the National Planning Committee and translate it into practice.

Everywhere in the country there abounds the freshness of a natural life, awaiting to be disciplined, canalised and moulded by the National Government, with the help of individuals and societies that are proved to be the most competent to undertake the nation-building task in India, which should start from the very bottom, from this trinity, this food-clothing-shelter problem.

Is there enough food in our country to feed her forty two crores of people ? The answer is : There is enough, and more. To feed the famished, shrivelled and sunken bellies of India's millions, we need adopt scientific agriculture, scientific manuring and introduce collective farming system as in the Soviet Union. The actual production of wheat in India is 7 per cent of the world production, compared to 30 per cent in Russia, 16 in U. S. A., 11 in Canada, 6 per cent in France and Australia, 5 in Italy, 4 in Germany, 3 in Turkey and 1 in Egypt.

The rice production figures is as follows : Of the 96 per cent of the Asiatic production of rice, China produces 35 per cent, India, 26, Japan 9 and Burma 6. India produces 18 per cent of world's total sugar production. In tobacco, after the United States, (which produces 28 per cent) India is the biggest tobacco producing country with 22 per cent. Similarly in cotton production, India is the first (15 per cent of the world production) after the United States (41 per cent). Tea, which is almost exclusively of Asiatic production, is grown in India giving just over 25 per cent of the world production.

The natural riches of our country, still untouched and unexplored, are so vast that even our biggest industrialists, the leading business magnates, who prepared the Bombay Plan, can hardly put them in black and white. Mind you, the available statistics with regards to the production, the natural resources of our country, are taken at the present embryonic stage of Indian Industry. The potential capacity of India for production and development are such that our country is becoming the object of envy for many nations.

Fatima: As I surveyed and studied the face of Mother India, I felt convinced that we have to set aside music and poetry for a while, and devote all our national and natural resources for a purely scientific and positivistic development of our country. The crying need in our country is to provide for our countrymen these three essentials of life, food, clothing and shelter. I am all for the industrialisation of the country, for a purely scientific, positivistic and economic interpretation of history. When I once spoke about this purely economic development of our country, some of the Sevagram Ashramites took it ill, as if the plan of the Indian industrialists and scientists and positivistic economists were all out to defeat the Wardha Scheme. I have given serious thought for years to the two systems of thought, that of a mechanised and roboted society and the go-back-to-the-village gospel of men like John Ruskin, Leo Tolstoi, W. Thoreau and Mahatma Gandhi. Weighing the pros and cons I am forced to support the views of the industrialists. Every theory, every system, has its two sides. But weighing the pros and cons, I am forced by evidence to conclude that Gandhiji's Wardha Scheme can have ample scope for the development of the rural economy for some time, but it is out of place in a progressing India, determined to survive the chaos and confusion of the present century.

With this is closely linked the question of socialization of India, not just a lifeless imitation of the Soviet pattern, but a creative representation of India's genius, fulfilling her past in this Atomic Age. One of the most significant statements made by Gandhiji was his public confession that non-violence was but a policy, not a creed, for the Congress, although it remained a creed and not a policy with him. Creed, Gandhiji said, admits no change, whereas policy does. Again, under the ravaging fires of communal war in the Punjab and Delhi, the Military and the Police

dominated the scene. Gaudhiji has also recently stated that the military are there to protect the public "from wild beasts". So we now come to the views held by the Hero of Hindustan, the great architect of the I. N. A., my friend Subhas Chandra Bose, of high idealism, balanced with realistic statesmanship, based upon the mass psychology of the common man.

Bharat : O it is only too obvious that the place of Gandhiji is among the few prophets and saints of the world, a saintly revolutionary, but not among the biggest statesmen of the world. Each one has his own niche and must remain under his or her own vault. Has the pacifist philosophy any universal significance when God himself creates, destroys and recreates ? The lion and the tiger, the panther and the wolves, feed upon their fellow-creatures. Death sentence is not a counterpart to undo the moral evils of certain confirmed criminals. In India there are living beings who chronically suffer and die by inches. If neither science nor Gandhiji's saintly balm could bring relief to them, the best thing is to administer euthanasia and bring relief to their lives by taking away life from them. That will be kindness and *ahimsa*, whereas to leave them in their suffering will be cruelty and *himsa*. To born-beings death is certain ; to dead-beings birth is certain.

Fatima : I remember how a Muslim divine told us, when Maulana Abul Kalam Azad was with us here in Calcutta, before he was expelled from the Mosque by the orthodox League Muslims how God Himself is violent in many ways. God hates sin, though not the sinner, they say. These are but metaphorical expressions which fall short when applied to God. As a saintly politician Gandhiji has proved his diplomacy also, although his diplomacy has often failed before men. His diplomacy can succeed only with God and God-like human beings. But the fact is that the vast bulk of mankind have been, are, and will continue to be, the first-borns, for whom war and violence, love and hatred, lust and passions, are realities. Yet the divine men should struggle and wrestle along to bring as many as they can to the divine port, although Christ's saying that only few enter through the "straight and narrow path that leadeth to life", remains ever true.

Bharat : O what a theological digression from our food and cloth and shelter problem ! Now back to our land. I visited those extensive irrigation canals of the Punjab, a magnificent

method of preserving rain water and canalising them for agricultural purposes. The deserts in the Punjab are turned into magnificent granaries of India. Now there are only 70 thousand miles of them irrigating something like 28 million acres of land. The Deccan plateau, where the land is older, could be scientifically made younger than the continental part of India, known as *Aryavartha*. But Science alone is the great hope for building up India as a mighty nation. Science, when used, is a blessing to mankind, a curse when abused. This is true of love and the entire creation underneath the sun ; for the right use of creatures lead us to our divine goal ; their abuse drag us down to filth and infernal abyss, to hades.

CORPORATE LIVING

Fatima : O Bharat, let's leave aside these facts and figures for a while and soar a bit into the divine sky ? Let's leave it to men like Minoo Masani, Dr. Lokanathan, G. D. Birla, N. R. Sitcar and the Tatas to furnish us with facts and figures and build up India on that basis, not only for the agricultural and industrial development of the country, but also for her militarization and roboting, which, unfortunately, is the need of the hour in India. Back-to-the-village gospel, if pressed to its logical conclusions, will make Mother India, weak, and excommunicated from the materially advanced nations of the world.

Let's leave aside these and sing more wonderful songs. Or as Virgil said : *Paulo majora canamus*—Let's sing somewhat higher things ?

During my tour through the villages and towns, it pained my heart to see the extreme type of isolated individualism rampant in our Motherland. That corporate, community and social living, is almost completely lacking in our country. While the extreme individualism in our country enabled this land to give birth to some of the finest spiritual giants and freedom-fighters, it has also left the general masses of the country almost bordering to the animal kingdom. It is the common man that matters, not Gandhis, Tagores and Nehrus.

From the common man there arise the uncommon men. The common man, they who lead the life of the first-born, is the *materia prima*, the common clay, whence the most wonderful

personalities emerge. The common man, the labouring man, the unthinking many, in the words of Karl Marx, is the "New Isreal, the chosen people of God".

Everywhere I observed that the villagers and town-dwellers alike lie like sheep without a shepherd, like people in darkness without a light, a guide, a leader. The mass influence of the politicians do not reach the marrow of their being, for, their needs are individual. Individual attendence is needed to heal their physical, mental and moral evils. With the lowest living conditions, with appalling ignorance and poverty, they sink lower and lower. Their life-line is the shortest, 27 years, when compared to the average life line of 67 years of a New Zelander, 63 of a Scandinavian, 62 of a citizen of the United States, 60 of Canada, 67 of France, 45 of Russia, 43 of Japan, 33 of Egypt and China. What a contrast between these walking skeletons in the villages and towns and the fattened dolls in the princely palaces in India ! What a contrast between the misery and the silent sufferings of these unfortunate many with the oriental pageantry and Venus-worshipping of the monied few ! What a heaven wide gulf between their poor brains with those polished philosophers and saints and seers of modern India !

The monied man, the big salaried man, is primarily concerned with his little self, his wife and children, his courtisans, flatterers and concubines. The sense of social justice is almost completely lost to them. The sores and scenes of degradation have gone far too deep that we need radical remedies to remove the cancers from the body of Mother India, to heal her of all the present and potential maladies, and enable her to rise among the tallest nations of the world. When I saw these tragic scenes with my own eyes I said to my heart : "Keep silent with regard the 'ancient glories' and the undying laurels of the Indo-Aryan civilisation. Strike at the root, criticise yourself and others ; arise, awake, fight, wrestle, against all forms of darkness, selfishness and ignorance and arrogance ; and establish the kingdom of Socialist Justice, the Kingdom of righteousness and truth, in this beloved country of yours, in this adored country of yours, in this wonderland of ours, in this *Hindustan hamara*".

In Europe one sees the sense of collectivism, social living developed so wonderfully. This social living was not, and is not,

at present, the monopoly of those nations where the Semitic religions predominate. The ancient Aryan countries and—for that matter—wherever Aryan blood runs, as it does in most of the European countries, enjoyed a highly developed corporate system. Both the Iranian Mazdeism and Indian Brahmanism were the expression of this corporate living. But after centuries of predatory invasions and conquests and subjection, India lost her soul and reached the deplorable state in which we are in today.

Because our people have little social sense, with no corporate living, except in a very rudimentary sense on certain special occasions, as during the religious festivals, marriages and deaths, their loneliness increases, which, coupled with the economic bankruptcy of the common man, makes him more a liability than an asset to the State.

SEX LIFE—ECONOMY AND WASTE

Because most of our peoples have no creative channels to express themselves, to create and recreate, they merely vegetate and procreate. The population of India is alarmingly increasing without the corresponding moral and intellectual growth guaranteed. When there is a healthy social life, every boy need not sigh after every girl, and every girl need not sigh and pine away for every boy. Where Self is not realised sex predominates. Nowhere in the world the Freudian psychology is better studied and analysed than in India. When I saw these and a thousand other scenes of woe and misery, I resolved to criticise the very foundations of those institutions and fabrications that deflected from the noble and unparalleled spiritual grandeur of our country. We have many assets : but time is not yet come to sing poetry about them. The good side of Indian life will take care of itself. All that is needed is to rectify the toxin that runs in our blood, to mend our false traditional ways and end our woes and miseries—I mean the hell of individualistic isolation of the common man.

Give our men and women creative channels and a healthy social environment. We are mostly the products of our environment. We are the architects of our own destiny. If we succeed it's God's grace. If we stagnate, go backward or merely vegetate and procreate, the fault is ours. What can a young man or woman do under our present conditions but to seek outlets for the vital energy in

many ways, chiefly through sexual gratification ? The young girl in the villages begins to bear children when she has hardly attained the age of puberty and continues to multiply her offspring like rats until the time when it becomes physically impossible to bear children any longer. I have seen the slavery of our women-folk, whether it is under the purdha system of the Muslims or under the veil of the Hindus. As long as there is breadth in my nostrils I will fight against them. God give me grace to fulfil this grand mission in life ! I will not care a pin what others may think of me. But I will forge ahead, singing lyrics about what is eternal in our civilisation, but fulminating anathemas against the forces of darkness in this country. My country is humanity, which I long to serve through my service to Mother India. The orthodox sections in India need not consider me as their foe because I denounce the present economic, social and political evils of the country. From the days of Solon or Manu, of Moses and Zarathustra, very few have come to this earth to awake, arouse and enlighten the sleeping many of this earth. I will try to be one among those few gadflies, whom God in his mercy, has sent to this land of Hindustan, this Hindustan hamara.

Bharat : Do continue, your inspired talk, Fatima. You seem to touch the right cords in my hearts. I know every Indian citizen has to place his or her brick in the building up of a new nation. Where every prophet ; every fighter, every journalist, politician, economist, social reformer, educationalist, industrialist, have their share to contribute, their noble part to play. All must give what they can to this mighty nation-building task. But to be a servant of India and Humanity, I know that one must be completely selfless, with clean hands and pure hearts.

Fatima : And also the *Brahmacharya Vrita*, which, when undertaken after experiencing sex-life, is the source of manifold blessings to one's own country and to humanity, "*Brahmacharyanusthaya viryalabha*" (Through confirmed continence the acquisition of vigour), says Patanjali.* Our country is to be saved from the filth of unrestrained sexual life both in the villages and towns. A Europe-returned gentleman in Cawnpore objected to my view saying that sexual life in India is more restrained than in Europe or America.

* Yoga, Book. II. 38.

I answered him more or less in these words : It does not matter in the least what other nations do or do not. We have to mend our ways and show paths of enlightened consciousness and the way to a healthy growth of body, mind and will to our citizens. I would plead with you not to dwell simply on the good side of our medal. Let's be critical and unbiased enough to undo our wrongs. Let's thank those who have shown us our drawbacks and social ills. I am a woman and I would say that even Catherine Mayo would have become a benefactrix to India, had she pure intentions behind while depicting the blackest sides of Mother India. Look here, my friend, I am harsh against myself. Before I criticise others, I criticise myself. I want all our leaders, guides and teachers, to be living patterns of what they preach about and dream after. The world is sick of incoherent sermonizing.

A healthy and prosperous India should impose strictest discipline out of sheer conviction, if possible, through enforced legislation, if necessary. Our youth should not be wasted nor become wrecked skeletons before age through unbridled indulgence in sexual life before the mature age. The mature seeds alone can produce mature fruits. Through later marriages youths, who have passed their Brahmacharya period in study and formation of both mind and body, yearn for the best fruits to our country, healthy, graceful and intelligent children, the pride and grace of a nation. Mature boys should marry and mate with mature girls, old men with old women. But the inequality of the marriage age in India is appaling. Girls in their earliest teens are betrayed to middle aged men to satisfy their lust. The dowry system in India is the symbol of the bondage of women. Women is the equal partner of man and she cannot be sold either to the biggest bidder nor shamefully betrayed to unequal partner for purely temporal gains. The woman also must be made economically free, the root of all other freedom.

Men and women are essentially spirit. Men and women are what they are by virtue of their mind and will, which are rooted in their ego-consciousness, the basis of personality. The idea of personality is lost in India, not only in the highy metaphysical circles where the *advaita Vedanta* persists, but also among the common people where pestiferous customs still prevail. The cruel practice of *sati* and early child marriages are over. But the struggle for the emancipation of our womenfolk continues. The

fight initiated by Rammohun, the Father of Modern India, has hardly borne fruits. Illiteracy, poverty, weakness of our menfolk, bondage of our womenfolk, are still there. The fact that in big cities like Calcutta, Bombay or New Delhi some women are apparently emancipated does not disprove the fact of the universal bondage of men and women in this dear country of ours, this land of our birth and love, this *Hindustan hamara*.

The Indian sarees should be raised far above the western frocks. Social and free life, spontaneous growth of the inner personality of both the menfolk and the womenfolk should be given. For these the New Socialist Republican State of the Indian Union should come forward, and adopt the most practical steps to raise India, far above the heights of the Himalayan peaks, far beyond the blue skies and smiling moon of the Indian skies. I stand for, and am determined to fight for, the emancipation of the sarees.

Bharat : And what sarees do we find in the villages ! Nowhere underneath the sun human mind and imagination created such an artistic dress for women as the Indian sarees. They show the highest peak of civilisation which India reached in those good old days, when our proud forbears dressed the women up, the walking goddesses, in the most artistically beautiful sarees.

During my wanderings throughout the land I felt
 The thrill of the Infinite through the feminine form arrayed,
 As chorus of angels from the highest heaven alighted.
 Even to this day woman is goddess to the Indian mind,
 She is *devi* throughout the length and breadth of Hindustan,
 She is the Mother who gives life, the Sweetheart who gives love.
 What is man without woman ! What's woman without man !
 There's no integrated life and developed personality
 Save in the heart communion of the one with the other,
 Until the time when wisdom dawns and one sees Infinity,
 Reflected through the mirror of the finite, in *samsara*.
 Through misery and poverty our country has passed,
 Ever mindful, howbeit, of her immortal heritage of the Spirit,
 Which, though submerged in the unconscious, is still alive,
 The key to open the closed doors of the imprisoned Hindustan.
 Enough materials we have to build up our land
 On the solid rock of the Eternal Man whose band
 Of music is heard uninterruptedly from the golden age

Of our ancient land to these days, when you and I live
 To serve, born to serve India's Humanity, in truth and love,
 This country has given me birth, all her treasures are mine,
 I am exceedingly proud of this Motherland of mine,
 But whether she could feel equally feel proud of me, I
 dont' know.

But with bended knees and folded arms I prostrate
 In loving adoration, in dedicated devotion to my Motherland,
 Who taught me the song of *satyam, jnanam, anandam Brahma*.

Fatima : Now between you and me, I must say, I must sing the glorious Canticle of this wonderland. This music sustains us through the battle we encounter to build our nation, a building-task that always begins and continues, but never ends. To make India great, it's essential that her national soul is kept intact. Every country should grow on its own national roots. India will cease to be the garden of God and the envy of mankind, were she to deny her past soul, embodied in her philosophy, religion and mythology. Every religion or system that comes from abroad should be grafted on to this national trunk and grow, flower and fructify on that. Any civilization that is conquered by another is inferior to that which is conquering. In so far as Europe accepted Christianity of the Jewish type the ancient Greco-Roman civilisation succumbed. But Greek civilisation was superior to the Semiticized Christianity, which, in fact, continued to flourish and thrive even during the dark ages. But since the period of Humanism and Renaissance, the ancient Aryan Greek spirit asserted itself and came to the fore. Even to this day Western civilisation has not found as yet the harmony between the finite and the infinite, the integrated personality, the Whole Man, balanced between the spirit and matter, between God and the world, between religion and politics. It will fall to the proud lot of free India to give to the world the path of integration to this benighted, authority-ridden and fear-haunted humanity.

During my tour I met many Christian missionaries who are out to conquer India to their versions of Christ and Christianity. India has a soul and it should never be denied by listening to the stories of the missionaries. The missionaries should quit India, if they cannot adapt themselves to India and adopt her as their country. Our youth, with education and by the right environment

should be enabled to feel the thrill of the real soul of India. The modernised Indian *sahibs* and *mem sahibs* should be enabled to rediscover their national soul, which is the only way for them to serve God and their Motherland. *Dio e Patria*, God and Fatherland, was the great motto of the greatest of modern Italians, Guisepppe Mazzini. This should be the motto of young India, free India, united India, democratic, Socialist and Republican India ; so that our socialist slogans may be a living creed of our national soul. Pandit Nehru has said : "Socialism for me is not a mere economic theory, it is a vital creed which I hold with all the force of my head and heart".

Engulfed we are in the ocean of nationalism ; surrounded we are by the grand patriarchs, architects and heroes of Free India. From the battle of Plassey down to August 15th 1947 there is a long and most interesting history which some intelligent and noble son or daughter of India should adequately describe, and transmit to our children and grandchildren as the *elixir vitae* of Indian nationalism.

Above all should I and you, and all, understand that divine simplicity of the greatest representative men and women of ours, and, for that matter, of all the great men and women of world history, and we should build up our country on that basis, the basis of simplicity, of a simple and natural life, of pure and unsullied life.

CHAPTER IV

MAHATMA GANDHI

6 p. m. I. S. T. January 30th. Das and Fatima listening to the wireless news ; the most tragic of all news ; the black news that obscured the sun, that brought about concussions and heart-breaks to many million hearts in India, abroad. Bapuji is shot dead !

The Father of the Indian Nation fell a victim to religious bigotry ; the supreme martyr of twentieth century has smilingly passed beyond the jaws of Death ; the philosopher-statesman, the saint-politician, the Bapu of millions, is no longer with us. Bapu could not have died of old age, of some physical illness ; he was too great for any natural illness to drag him to the grave. The royal path of martyrdom which crowned the lives of eminent prophets of history, of Moses, Socrates, Jesus, Hazarth Ali, Abraham Lincoln and many others, was to be the path for Bapuji also. Twentieth century cross or hemlock is bullet shots, which crowned the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi, the Saint, the Prophet, the Enlightened One of our century.

The life of India stopped automatically when the sad news was broadcast ; nay the entire humanity was made dumb, bewildered, lost, when the news was spread. London was stirred ; New York and Washington stood up in silent homage ; Moscow felt deeply grieved ; all countries underneath the sun were shocked more profoundly and spontaneously than by the passing away of any mortal man in history. None in history held such a large following in so many parts of the world, for such a long time, with the sheer dint of personality and profound humanity, transparent sincerity and uncontaminated sanctity, as Gandhiji, the greatest figure of our century.

Gandhiji was the soul of India and India was Gandhiji's soul. India is profound humanity ; profound humanity is India. Humanism and naturalism, psychological religion and divine mysticism are ingrained in every Indian soul. India rose to eminence from pre-historic times through her humanist philosophy and mystic intuition. All the prophets of modern India bore the imprint of this inalienable trait of every son and daughter of Mother India.

Gandhiji was the embodiment of India's humanistic religion and mystic intuition. The giant among men of our century fell at 5.40 P.M. on 30th January at the hands of a 36-year-old Maharati Hindu. Ava and Abha Gandhis, the two guardian angels of Bapu, were left alone when Bapu collapsed and sank. India collapsed, the world collapsed, for the Sun of Righteousness and the Prince of Peace has fallen. Delhi, the city with over a four thousand years of history behind, became thus the Jerusalem, one of the veritable eternal cities of the world.

In this eminently psychic age there arose one man in the heart of Hindustan, the foremost among the mental sensitives, a leader among the reflectives, a prince among the resistives, the Mahatma of our century, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. He arose to eminence from the dust and the Mahatma was formed of the common clay. His living faith in the living God of his living heart, his ever-growing mental purity and strength of character, his business-minded economizing of his physical and mental powers in order to enable him to remove mighty mountains and empty out rivers and seas not oceans, brought him to the supreme spiritual heights which is given to a mortal man in this century to reach. An Indian to the core of his being through his profound humanity, Gandhiji became a real bridge-builder between the Orient and the Occident, although admittedly a different bridge from the one which Rabindranath built between the two civilizations. As in the lives of the leading prophets of the world, the power of Gandhian personality and his influence will be fully revealed only after the man is removed from the scene. The permanent contributions of Gandhiji will be gradually unfolded as decades and centuries pass by. A man for a thousand years or more is removed from us. A mighty wave on the sea of life has crashed; its ripples and waves will be revealed not until India and mankind are brought to a saner atmosphere, when, abandoning the intoxication of power-politics, they start to build up the Temple of Man afresh.

BAPU, HIS PERSONALITY

In no other contemporary sag we find the contrast between the lowliness of the flesh and the might of the spirit so conspicuously as in Gandhi. To a layman everywhere it is miracle how that

traditions, to all the sentient beings underneath the sun. The ecstatic divine love which he acquired through a living faith in the living God was made more real and vital through the human love Gandhiji experienced in all its forms. In this way the Mahatma became truly a Son of Man ; and in many ways similar to Christ, the Son of Man *par excellance*. In this way Gandhiji became a man who could feel the pulse of the people and could really be the interpreter and healer of the common man. His love was simple, sincere, naked, pure, a love that manifested itself through works. The devotional songs and hymns which Gandhiji used to sing and take delight in revealed that the Mahatma was profoundly touched by some magic and mystic intuitional love, a sort of ethereal and subtle love that captivated the heart of Rabia of Hazra or Mira Bai of Merwar. Devotional love flared up the heart of Mahatmaji and his living gospel of love became the warp and woof of his personality.

There was something of more than a mother in Gandhiji. His penetrating eyes and loving looks arrested the attention of even the most violent opponents of *ahimsa* and of even Gandhiji himself. The Urvasi in his was nobler and gentler and diviner than the Stoic Jupiter in him. Love, truth, devotion, characterised his life. The iron and undaunted will, of which Mahatmaji was an embodiment, was made soft and human through the influence of the divine Urvasi, who frowned on the child even from the days of his childhood in Porbandar, his school and college days in India and London, his first *Satyagraha* campaigns in South Africa and his mighty revolutionary movement in India which resulted in the mutilated freedom of our country. Whatever be the other reasons that compelled the British to quit India after the world war No. 11., there is on gainsaying the fact that Mahatma Gandhi was the chief architect of a free India, and that the motive force behind the intense activities of Mahatmaji was love. The dynamics of divine love became more intensely operative as Gandhiji grew older in age, thereby proving through his life that the laws governing the spiritual life and physical life are entirely different. It is they who lead an animalish life who decay with the decaying body and die with the dying involucrum ; but the spirituals grow as their body wither away. His body was the vehicle to fulfil God's purpose and Gandhiji was in God's hands, confidentially entrusting

himself into the care of Providence, even as a child abandons itself into the fondling arms of its mother. That was Mahatma Gandhi.

The experiments with truth which Mahatma Gandhi made are so sincerely, vividly and tersely recorded in his autobiography which could be ranked with the confessions of St. Augustine or the revelations of J. J. Rousseau or Leo Tolstoy. Gandhiji's experimentalism enabled him to be a scientist of human nature and human psychology. It is precisely the experiments with truth that gave him that unshakable conviction in the power of truth. God Himself, according to Gandhiji, is Truth, or as he put it more bravely in later days : Truth is God.

The gospel of Gandhiji is the gospel of love. It is through the gospel of love that Gandhiji managed to transform his personality, hypnotize millions and initiate an all-India movement for the political, economic and spiritual freedom of the country. A supreme yogi though Gandhiji was, his dynamic love led him through ever-more fruitful activities of service ; for as Kahlil Gibron says : "work is love made visible". Like God, the divine men act, for that's their call. They have no other alternative, although they see clearly that their path will be beneficial but to handful who directly or indirectly are influenced through the power of their personality. The bigger the idealism of the prophets the greater the disillusionment at the end of their life. One after another the prophets experience all the various disillusionments and disappointments in life. Hence they pray and sigh. Jesus Christ prayed that the chalice, (not the chalice of the personal suffering and the impending crucifixion, but the chalice of malice of the world that crucifies, poisons, guillotines and burns and shoots down many a righteous prophet of God), may be taken away from him. Gandhiji prayed God that He may take him away from the world before he could see the painful scenes resulting from the power-intoxication of the communal fiends after August 15th 1947.

The scenes of degeneration in India have so deeply stirred Mahatma Gandhi that he sacrificed everything that stood in his way to total service of his country. The poverty rampant on all sides, the degradation of the womenfolk, the withering away of children under teens due to lack of food and clothing and shelter, the oppression and corruption of the officialdom, the infinite sufferings

of the dumb millions throughout the length and breadth of the country, stirred him up to devote his life to the great cause of relieving the suffering of the largest possible number of his countrymen. The hungry birds do not sing and hence Gandhiji left the violin and flute aside which he started learning in London as a young fashionable student. That profession he left to Rabindranath. Being work but love translated into visibility, Gandhiji developed an entire system of economics and politics compatible with his ideals about Truth or God. He lived his faith ; his faith was his life fully lived, rich in divine apostolate and fruitful to the last drop of his blood. Instead of giving way to despondency, dejection and dereliction-sense, that so generally characterises the thinking minds, particularly so in India, Mahatma Gandhi acted and acted strenuously and incessantly till the end of his life. He fell in the battlefield like a valient hero.

The world goes on as usual, laughing and weeping, making wars and truce, as it always happens after the supreme sacrifice of saints and prophets. But Gandhiji's special contribution is the divine dynamic, or the *karma yoga* path, translated into the most practical fields of life, will remain. It is action that flows from the depths of contemplation that we see personified in the life of Mahatma Gandhi. Contemplative life, the mystic and self-realised life, without its corresponding counterpart in the life of action is futile in this world, particularly in this Atomic Age. Not monastic seclusion, not dried-up and morbid asceticism, but divine action in human life that is so badly needed today. The fruits of self-discipline and self-sacrifice are all brought to play their full part ; faith in the living God and in His Providence are all made real through the realistic approach towards the struggle for existence. That is Gandhiji.

The deep understanding of human nature in its various aspects enabled Gandhiji, the uncrowned King of India,—as they used to call him—to exercise a dominating influence, irresistible charm and authority that was derived from the sheer power of his personality. He valiently fought for the real freedom of all men and women alike. He knew very well that every minute of his precious life was given him by God to fulfil His designs. Like the good servant of the Gospel, Mahatma Gandhi traded with his talents, so that when the Master came to render accounts he could

pay what was given him by the Lord with interest. In this sense all wise man, prophets and saints are the stewards and trustees of God's grace and bounty, to be dispensed freely unto the erring and stunted humanity. Knowing that mere words and speeches will not be fully effective if there was not an ideal life behind, Gandhiji lived his faith, reducing the inevitable contradictions of practice and theory to the minimum. It was the personality that gave him authority, even as Jesus won authority through the sheer dint of his divine personality. Men and women who cared for a powerful personality, those who loved sincerity, purity and truth, felt the irresistible charm of the Gandhian personality, which had various results, all unto good, in various persons. A powerful and living personality needs no artificial props, needs no advertising agencies and propaganda machines to set their ideas and ideals in motion. Their personality is all-in-all. But, the world will continue to run its course even if a hundred Jesuses and Gandhis were to appear simultaneously in this world. Hence, Gandhiji, like the great prophets of the world, fell and produced mighty waves in the ocean of human history, in the life and growth of Indian nation in particular.

The stronghold of Gandhiji on the fundamental laws of Nature gave him that freshness and incredible vitality which is the gift the Mother Nature bestows upon all those who are her obedient and loving children. Grace of body and soul, adamantine harndess of muscles and invulnerability of veins were fully acquired by Gandhiji as he advanced in Bhakti Yoga. Loving devotion and static imperturbability were harmoniously blended into the great soul, *Mahatma*, of Gandhiji. Being called upon to engage himself in the minutest details of life, in the midst of hardships and struggles, Gandhiji succeeded in keeping his soul and heart firmly fixed on God. The inner purity and complete conquest of the lower self gave Gandhiji that singlemindedness of purpose and undaunted will which were needed for many new ordeals or ventures Gandhiji embarked upon in life. A creative mind, one who has glimpsed into the glory of the Unmanifested Reality, one who through life and love has become one with the Supreme, Mahatma Gandhi, became great in his humility, divine in his profound humanity. Like Brahman, smaller than the smallest, yet bigger than the biggest became Mahatma Gandhi after his

individual consciousness was absorbed in the life of Paramatma, in whom he firmly remained rooted during all the ordeals and trials, achievements and failures of his life.

REAL GREATNESS OF THE MAHATMA

The real greatness of Mahatma Gandhi lies in being able to maintain his profound humanity even when he ascended to the summits of divine perfection. The more divine was Gaudhiji the more humane he became. The more divine he became the nearer the ideal of sacrifice he reached. Verily, Gaudhiji was the greatest Hindu Christian who lived in the twentieth century world.

As one sets along the vale of life, various are the alternatives that confront a man. Life is a series of choosing the right path among the many alternatives. The more correct the choice the higher the ideal a man reaches, and more fully that he fulfils his mission. Human perfection does not depend upon the right choice to be persistently made throughout life. That will keep us perpetual children and spoon-fed saints. The world does not need any more dried-up ascetics and cradle-to-grave saints. The real greatness and the solid virtue accrue when a man or woman makes the wrong choice, but recovers from the penalty of such a wrong choice, and steers straight along the sea of life with reformatory and regenerative zeal. The pitfalls in this way become the stepping stones to his success. Man's success is in his failure. "Where the sin abounds there superabounds grace divine," says St. Paul. The Church, in her enthusiasm to chant this divine economy in human life, sings : O blessed sin that merited for us such a great and noble Redeemer divine—*O felix culpa quae talem et tantum meruit redemptorem.* Jesus had the most intimate of his friends among the publicans and harlots. Mary Magdalen was a haterae for the noble Roman soldiers and aristocratic selected few. Yet Magdalen to this day is the greatest pattern of Christian penitence and proficiency in virtue. St. Augustine would never had been St. Augustine without his early licentious living, nor St. Francis would have ascended to the summits of divine perfection had he not been a distracted boy in his youth. St. Jerome sank into the mire in Rome : but when he arose, he became a beacon light throughout the early Christendom, and indeed a light to the world. So is the life of all the worthiest and noblest children in the history of

religions. Asoka, St. Paul and a host of others still stand out as the embodiments of this divine economy in life.

Gandhiji's sanctity started perhaps too early in his life which saved him from that hellish conflicts and neurosis which a modern life-experimentalist like Ibson, John Middleton Murry and others suffer from. Yet the conflict of the prophet was always there in the life, feelings and utterances of Mahatma Gandhi. Gandhiji, like the greatest prophets in history, felt in his life the sufferings and pangs of his fellow-countrymen, of his fellow-creatures. Being the greatest man of the century, Gandhiji moved with the lowliest, the forlorn and the lost. To do the will of Him who sent him was indeed the bread of Gaudhiji. He evangelized the poor, gave sight to the blind, legs to the lame, visited the sick and the dying. A father indeed was Bapuji to the orphans, a mother to the children, a comrade and trusted friend to all.

Gandhiji's inner strength came from his conscious communion with the *elan vital* of the universe. Without some living faith in some living ideal,—be that ideal a woman, a man, a home, nation, a god or devil, a statue or image,—the vital forces in us become exhausted and the inner resources become empty very soon. It is a living faith in some living ideal that links us to the infinite source of life and vitality, God. With the lack of this living faith a man just rolls and revels, gathers and squanders, and just wastes away, exhausts away and become a mental, a spiritual consumptive. But the more living and real the faith is the more alert and dynamic he becomes, for work is nothing but love made operative. For this reason Gandhiji's spiritual and mental faculties increased towards the close of his life, as it was the case with all the prophets, particularly with Jesus. Gandhiji was shot dead when his spiritual mission was being fulfilled at its highest. Verily the outer man grows old and dies ; but the inner man is renewed from strength to strength, as St. Paul clearly experienced and testified it.

Gandhiji, like all the prophets, was a living philosopher. A real philosopher, like a real poet or artist, is a creator. Creativity is the attribute of God Himself and only divine men create, such being varitable philosophers, artists, musicians, poets, bards and prophets. A real philosopher needs no prop to support him ; for he is self-supported ; he seeks no honour, fame or name, although name,

fame, honour, all follow him like a shadow. Real greatness of a man is measured in his approximation to, and assimilation with, God. Although the universe or *samsara* depends upon divine will, God Himself never mixes up with the universe which is always in a state of becoming. Whereas superficial men, in their littleness, seek some satisfaction in fleeting pleasures, in assuming and fighting for scrambles of power and false reputation, it is supermen who, like gods, rise above the common folk ; look gracefully and graciously upon the suffering humanity and show them the real path they should pursue to end their births and rebirths, their sin and death, their woes and sufferings. Life without philosophic intuition and self-examined contemplative dynamics is not worth living.

The regeneration process in Gandhiji was so thorough that he became simple like a dove, pure like an angel, innocent like a child. "Unless you are converted and become like little children you shall not enter into the kingdom of God", says Jesus. The Gaudhian laughter is the embodiment of Gandhian child-like simplicity and innocence. Gandhiji felt himself normal when he was with children or with those who, through angelic purity and prayer, through self-control, self-knowledge and self-confidence, have become like little children, in the evangelical and religious sense of the term. Gandhiji was the Bapu of all children ; and all Indians of national self-respect and inner purity were all children, brothers and sisters, to Bapuji.

This frail man, from nothing, created a force that regenerated our country in a way that was never done by any before him for the last several centuries, and most likely in a way never to be done by any for a long time to come. This is not being pessimistic nor wishing ill to anybody who may well compete with Gandhiji, the real Father of the Nation. A country divided against itself, prostrate on her feet, inactive, despondent and inoperative, was raised, dynamised and organised as to stand united against the foreign exploitor, to reorganise the Indian society on a solid basis. Ordinary men would have fallen prostrate at the Herculian labours and Himalayan obstacles that were on the way in the building up of a free nation out of sheer nothing. From the earliest period of Gandhian struggle in South Africa, and latter on in India, a living faith in God and the spirit of heart-felt prayer

held Gandhiji in the lap of the Universal Mother of all, Infinity, God. The little self was gone and what was still left enabled Gandhiji to act, for without some little self left within the yogi he cannot act, as Sri Ramakrishna also clearly states.

Gandhiji grew super-sensitive to every detail in life. To him the human problems mattered most and he would spare no pains if only he could be of some service to the aching and ailing brothers and sisters who thronged around him to seek comfort, consolation, advice and help. A growing sense of duty held him ever-active and sensitive to perceive and tackle the most delicate and difficult problems in our individual and national life. When the hardest realities of life begin to hit a man, after he had passed the care-free years of early youth, it is only a sense of social and national responsibility, the stern call of Duty and vocation, that will keep him alert, operative and dynamic in life. Or else, one might easily fall back upon the life of obscurity and sex and sink with the sinking ship, fall with the fallen humanity, die with the dead herd of every nation. But a duty-conscious man is alert, vigilant, circumspect, prayerful, resourceful, witty, intelligent, critical, independent, God-confident. Gandhiji surpassed most of his countrymen in these qualities that are generally found in every great prophetic genius. He added his own personal qualities and virtues to these. The call of Duty held him on the right track. Prayer strengthened him day by day inspiring and upholding him to encounter the ever-new and fresh trials that were falling to his lot from every side of national and international life. As God who has nothing to gain by action, so Gandhiji, although he had nothing to gain by action, lived a karma yogin till the end of his life, a martyr and prophet of Duty, of Karma Yoga in the twentieth century atomic world. Even when disillusionments came to harass him from every side,—for, Gandhiji died one of the most disillusioned prophets of the world,—Gandhiji was able to maintain his smile of innocence and erect head of confidence. Truly, indeed, Mother India should feel eternally proud for having given birth to noblest angels and saintly prophets like Sakyamuni, Sankaracharya, Kabir and Nanak, Ramakrishna and Gandhiji. Hail India, Mother of Grace and Love, Mother of Gods and goddesses.

OUT OF THE COMMON CLAY

The lives of great prophets and saints, as we read them in the history of religions and philosophies, are far removed from us. But Gandhiji has lived with us and has set us the noblest and divinest example. This divine man, this Mahatma, was seen with our very eyes ; was listened to with our own very ears. St. John's first epistle opens up with these words : "That which was from the beginning, which we have heard, which we have seen with our eyes, which we have looked upon ; and our hands have handled, is the Word of life".* This is true for us about Mahatma Gandhi. Even after reaching the Mahatmahood, Gandhiji continued working with ever-fresh and new hopes and enterprizing spirit. Nothing is grander in the life of a great man, particularly in the life of Mahatma Gandhi, than this growing interest and increasing selfless activity, defeating cold indifference and somnolence, which unfortunately creep in with the growing age. Gandhi grew a growing child, a divine man, as the years he lived underneath the sun passed by. In this distracted world, even the memories or the lessons taught by, or learnt from, prophets like Gandhiji are but short-lived, even among his close friends and associates. But life is to be accepted as an enterprizing adventure not for any selfish or human consideration, but for its own sake ; for virtue is its own reward, sin its own nemesis, whether they are recorded or remembered by the posterity or not.

We know Gandhiji's life. Besides the many biographies and books written about Gandhiji, we have Gandhiji's own narrative, "My Experiments With Truth", in which so candidly and movingly the Mahatma tells us his own story. Even an average superficial student of India knows the salient features, episodes and events in Gandhiji's life. He arose from the common clay. Instead of reclining back in helplessness or indulging in self-complacency, instead of preferring an easy and arm-chair life, Gandhiji from the earliest period of his South African life plunged himself into the prophet's path. The glamour boy of London became the glorious fighter in South Africa. Political consciousness was awakened in him through the vivid perception of the humiliations and sufferings of his own compatriots in the Union. The

* Ch. 1. 1.

man destined by Heaven to inflict a crushing blow to the race-arrogance and white superiority of the European races was the little frail coolie lawyer, Mahatma Gandhi. The great challenge he threw on the thinking westerners demanded of the Indian patriot a will stronger than steel, a character purer than angelic, an innocence truer than that of children, a faith whiter than the snow up in the Himalayas. The young, showy, timid, shy violinist in London, now gives up his profession, his huge income, to share his lot with the common citizen of his country. The romance, idealism and inspiration associated with the Phænix Colony, Sabarmati Ashram and Sevagram are so rich that separate books by competent and creative Indians are to be written and brought to the minds and hearts of the common man in our country. His Socratic life of high idealism, divine simplicity, unflinching faith and high idealism starts in South Africa. Although a free-lance fighter and worker, Gandhiji realised the need of organisation, but a loose, voluntary organisation of workers and fighters like himself, who would stand up against the mighty for the defence of the just. The colour bar, the indenture system of labour, the disabilities of the Indian nations were all to be set right through the towering personality, through the personal integrity and purity of intentions of one single man, the little frail man, the great Mahatma of modern age. Satyagraha, passive resistance, in its active and dynamic form, came into being already in his South African campaigns.

For anyone interested in knowing the great secret of life, the force within him, that enabled Gandhiji to achieve miracle during his life-time, the key that opens the mystery of Gandhiji, is, in his own words, *Brahmacharya*. Gandhiji had stated in his EXPERIMENTS that when he reviewed his past he could see clearly that all he had been able to achieve centred around the vow of Brahmacharya which he took later in life. Patanjali says : *Brahmacharya anustāya viryalābha*—attainment of virility through Brahmacharya. No seriousness of life is gained, no great mission is fulfilled in life, no inner conviction is strengthened and rendered operative without the flavour of Brahmacharya. Brahmacharya is strength of body, light of mind, vigour of spirit and all-in-all in the life of the life of the prophet. By gaining chaste-virginity one wins over the finitude of creation. By conquering sex one

becomes the absolute master of his own self and is become one with the Universal Self, fearless, adventurous, self-confident, candid ; becomes he who, through self-control, has reached spiritual perfection in Brahmacharya. Gandhiji, during one of his prayer meeting addresses at Sodepure Ashram in 1946 stated that for the last sixteen years he had maintained control over himself. Working it out arithmetically it would mean that from the venerable age of sixty Gandhiji was maintaining complete mastery over his sex. But such a thorough control would entail many years of struggles and wrestlings. Mahatma Gandhi had all his lower instincts, passions and emotions under his control. In him were not denied passions and emotions ; but they were held under control ; they were sublimated and utilised to serve his noblest end. Without Brahmacharya nothing worthwhile is ever achieved.

In a country like India where sex life is so cheap, perfumed and enriched with oriental pageantry nothing is more difficult for an intelligent soldier of Mother India than to keep himself self-contained and within the bounds of Brahmacharya. Both young and old, weak and strong, rich and poor, indulge in sex. The population crisis is not of less importance than the economic, social and spiritual problems that rage wild within the country. An intelligent, thoughtful and resolute son or daughter of India, who has made service of country as his or her supreme aim in life, should muster infinite energy through Brahmacharya, complete control over oneself, through sublimating sex into creative channels of service and love. Despondency, indifferentism, weakness are to be defeated once for ever. National pride and self-respect should be heightened to the maximum degree. Courage and ever-increasing vitality are to be gained through the strict, scrupulous observance of the vow of Brahmacharya, which is the only path-way for God-vision, real and lasting service of one's own country and Humanity. The heart-pure alone see God.

Through prayer, continence, virginity, self-knowledge, Gandhiji gained control over the psychic forces within himself. The laws of physical life of his body and soul were most accurately analyzed and complied with. The dazzling brightness and adamantine hardness of the body of Bapuji was the result of the high degree of Brahmacharya and self-purification he reached. Through this infinite reservoir of spiritual and physical strength Gandhiji was

able to survive long fasts, undertaken in his old age, against all the sane advice of his doctors and physicians. Gandhiji knew his physique. The more complete was his self-renunciation the more perfect was his self-realised action. Jesus, Buddha, Krishna, Ram, were the prophets who were the guardian angels of Bapuji's heart all the years of his earthly pilgrimage. Those prophets and saints he adored underneath the sun have come and escorted the Mahatma when, pronouncing the last words "Hare Ram", Bapuji fell at the assassin's bullets. How ungrateful, myopic and cruel is this world ! The very man who took India to the portals of freedom, the man of supreme sacrifice and prophetic mission, was removed out of the scene when he was no longer considered to be falling in line with the mundane ways of the power-politicians after India had achieved her mutilated independence. Public memory is short-lived ; even personal friendships are so easily snapped !

This neurotic idea that the world or the country, people and nation, will continue as before, doomed to failure and death, and that nothing should or could be done about it, is to be set aside. It is ours to act ; God's to fructify. It is the call of Duty that should inspire us to act, not the fruits thereof, as the Gita clearly teaches. Act we must, for we all live in the world of action. This Kali Yuga is best suited for karma yoga ; the more dynamic is this atomic age, the more dynamic should be also the karma yoga of the modern prophetic man. A prophetic man should not worry about the sort of work he may leave behind him ; his is to act ; it's God's to make his fruits grow and yield more fruits for the good of the individual pilgrims and for the good of the country and of the Humanity at large.

SYNTHESIS OF RELIGIONS

A man who has delved into the depths of his own religion, has thereby reached into the core of all religions, for all religions are rooted in one religion, the Religion of Man. Religion itself is one, although religions are many ; Man himself is one, although men are of varied races and nations ; all are one, although all are or seem to be many. The *advaitic* monism is true not in the Vedantic and religious realm alone, it is true in the scientific and critical fields as well. Gandhiji reached the core of every other religion because he reached the rock-bottom of his own

religion, which is Hinduism, Indianism, which, to Gandhiji's mind, was nothing but the religion of Humanity. In self-sacrifice Gandhiji reached self-illumination; in self-illumination his Self-realization, in Self-realization Gandhiji reached the pinnacle of prophetism, Buddhahood and Christhood, all blended into one single personality. In fact, every great prophet, whether in ancient times or in modern age, by their very self-realization, have perceived and fully realised the essence of all religions. The Bibles and Corans and Vedas, to them, were but different chapters in the universal revelation of God. Even book-revelations were but a dim and shaky copy of a still greater revelation of God manifested in the laws and wonders of the Mother Nature. Gandhiji, like Jesus and Buddha, derived his main inspiration from the nature of Man; from the moral universe. Books and scriptures, priests and temples were secondary and non-essential details of their inner religious realisation. God is the Moral Law, Consciousness pure.

The prayer meetings of Gandhiji, it will be remembered, were fresh and inspiring, human and natural. His prayer meeting addresses were dealing with the topical subjects, with the special reference to the lot, sufferings and betterment of the common man, of the poverty-gods, *daridradevatas*, as Gandhiji loved to call them.

In a distracted, incredulous, sceptic world Mahatma Gandhi emerged as an apostle of living faith in the all-loving God. The scientific inquiry, critical acumen, mystic creativity and divine grace were all blended harmoniously in the person of Mahatma Gandhi. This gave him that unbeatable optimism and enabled him to laugh heartily even in the face of most disconcerting and disappointing circumstances in life. Even when despairing events filled his path, Gandhiji could sincerely smile like a child and laugh heartily even in the face of the darkest events and facts in life. Ever alert, mentally self-conscious, nationally awakened, with an undaunted will, Gandhiji could register most accurately even the most subtle and infinitesimal movements of his own heart. Because Gandhiji knew his own mind and heart so well it became easy for him to diagnose and understand and remedy the human ills in others, to encourage the good and noble in others. Gandhiji's profound humanism, that gentle and subtle human touch, all emerged from the core of his living faith. It is this faith, the common denominator in all great prophets of the world, the kernal

of all historical religions, that inspired and instigated Mahatma Gandhi to make nobler, bigger and diviner experiments as he grew older in body and younger in spirit.

The words Mahatmaji spoke gushed forth from the depths of his human convictions and truths mentally visualized, spiritually realized and keenly felt. A spiritual explorer should go forward, should never be broken-hearted, dejected nor despondent; for his is a mission to show the pioneer paths to this aching mankind, to inspire and guide the prosaic and unguided sheep. Mahatma Gandhi, fully aware of his divine mission, moved straight unto his destined goal, shunning frivolous joys and childish meriments and even the insecure path of music, art and poetry. The embodiment of self-sacrifice, like the prophets, was Mahatma Gandhi, for religion, as Gaudhiji used to delight to quote from Tulasi Das, "is based on sacrifice or self-denial, as irreligion is based on sex-indulgence or self-aggrandisement."

That inoperative indecision, inefficient scepticism, that reclining self-indulgence and self-complacency Gaudhiji was able to defeat in himself through prayer. "Prayer has saved my life without which I would have been a lunatic long ago", says Gaudhiji. While his hands were laid on supernal and supernatural greatness, Gaudhiji's feet touched the solid earth. The Mother Earth and Father Heaven fondled the Mahatma, beloved of gods and men. An undiluted idealist, Mahatma Gandhi, grew in his idealistic romanticism, his romantic idealism, like a young and pure youth, until the end of his life. It is this religious idealism, idealistic nationalism, that enabled Gaudhiji to abide by the life-acceptance ideal, knowing no despair, no retreating, no trace of despondency, dejection and defeat. Being a dutiful child of Hinduism, the sum and substance of India's national soul, Bapuji became the father to many spiritual children in India and abroad. The old synthetic genius of the Indian mind began to assert itself in the life of Gaudhiji even from his London days. The old religious bend of the Indian mind held him captive even from his cradle days. The old sympathetic, catholic and humanistic Indian approach followed Bapuji alike an inseparable shadow all throughout his life,

There is nothing more interesting, nothing more sublime, divine and difficult, than the singular phenomenon made manifest

in the life of Gandhi that he returned unto God what was His due, and unto Caesar what was his. Because in modern life, as a result of the growing industrialization and roboting of the society, due to the sad consequences of a soul-less materialistic philosophy, that has became so wide-spread and deep-rooted as it has never been in the history of nations, politics has become so all-absorbing a subject and tangle in the life of many thinking men and women of today. To escape political poison, as was done by Sri Aurobindo, or even to a large extent by Rabindranath Tagore, is condemned as pusillanimity, timidity and escapism. For a man of action like Gandhiji, there was no other alternative but that he wisely and dangerously pursued to the end of his life. In this age of Atomic diplomacy and senseless super-dynamism, one wonders whether there is any more room for the contemplatives and mental aloofs.

Whereas the greatest synthesis of religions have been so fully and marvellously achieved here in India, it fell to the lot of this great and ancient Mother India, this immortal *Hindustan Hamarā*, to give in the personality of Mahatma Gandhi a specimen, an ideal, of noblest politician among the saints, the saintliest among the politicians. The path he has shown is, indeed, so clean, so inspiring that all the thinking youth of this ancient land, and, indeed, so of the foreign lands, could emulate his footsteps, in keeping the torch of living faith alive, in the absolute mastery over the self and passion, in disinterested service of God in Humanity, of Humanity in God. These basic truths of human life were experimentally arrived at, were adheared to, adored and followed up to the last minute of his earthly pilgrimage by Gandhiji. This imprint of the realised Divinity in the life of Mahatma was expressed in all fields of his public life. Hence came a new economics, a new diplomacy, a new politics from the life, words and pen of Mahatma Gandhi. This could not have been otherwise, for a Mahatma should be one with the Paramatma, one, not divided, one in his life and practice, words and ideals, one in his private and public life, one with the Universal Self.

INDIA'S GUIDE AND PHILOSOPHER

Dr. Rajendra Prasad, on the historic midnight Session 14-15 August 1947, while announcing that the Constituent Assembly have taken over power for the Governance of India, referred to Mahatma Gandhi as one "who has been our beacon light, our guide and philosopher during the last 30 years or more. He represents that undying spirit in our culture and make-up which has kept India live through vicissitudes of our history. He it is who pulled us out of the slough of despondency and despair and blowed into us a spirit which enabled us to stand up for justice, to claim our birth-right of freedom and placed in our hands the matchless and unfailing weapon of Truth and Non-violence which, without arms and armaments, has won for us the invaluable prize of swaraj at a price, which, when the history of these times comes to be written, will be regarded as incredible for a vast country of our size and for the teeming millions of our population."

In this crazy and self-contaminated world, it is not a surprise that Gandhiji and the significance of his divine personality are so soon forgotten or deliberately left aside, even by his compatriots, by people who have even been his erstwhile disciples. The fate that overtook the great prophets and seers will be also the seal wherewith the life and teachings of Mahatma Gandhi also will be sealed. They who were realists and practical politicians, but with no firm stand on the Ground of this universe, managed to get rid of Mahatmaji from the scene. What other greater jewel could have the adversaries of Gandhiji offered him but to crown the divine life of man-Gandhi with the priceless pearl of martyrdom? The blood that trickled from his chest, the last words "Hare Rama", the supreme sacrifice he offered at New Delhi, the new Jerusalem, will continue to be the immortal monument and imperishable epitaph which the Rastriya Swayam Sevak Sangha chief, the devils of Capitalist plutocracy, the fiendish vandals who have made power, money, venus and crimes as their romantic ideal of life, have in fact bestowed upon Gandhiji, and indeed, through Gandhiji to the Nation, to India, *Hindustan Hamara*.

When a man loses his faith in God and in his own inner convictions, he becomes like a reed tossed about by the wind. He becomes idle, indulgent, self-adoring and an embodiment of selfish-

ness. It is this plain and elementary truth which we see so clearly in our every day life, whether it is in India or elsewhere. This is human nature. Man is born in sin, he grows, grovels and dies in sin. Only divine grace lifts him up and restores him to the pristine purity and splendour that are his due. Where this grace and enlightenment are deliberately obstructed or refused, there follow mental gloom, heart growing stone-dry and all the sources of inspiration and finer sentiments in man welled out. But Gaudhiji knew that freedom meant responsibility and that to lead a life of complete dedicated service and disinterested apostolate of Truth and non-violence, a living faith in Reality or Ground, in God or Deepest Humanity, was highly needed. So he could bear affronts, surmount Himalayan difficulties and smile even when his adventures cost his own very life. He risked his life and lived dangerously every day after he came to the public prominence. Like St. Paul he could say : "I die every day". He did die and he died living, as he lived dying.

The more selfish we are the more evil we do to ourselves, and indeed to our neighbours. Only a realy selfless man, who, through prayer, sacrifice and mortification, through living faith and charity, has completely effaced his ego and all forms of perishable self-interest can really benefit the society. Only these selfless persons are the channels of divine grace and agents of the Holy Spirit, the eternal Logos, who descending upon the pure in heart, in those who, taking up their cross every day, march towards the ideal of Self-realisation, sanctify them, freeing them from the virulent pangs of self-conceited loneliness and egocentric frigidity. These are saints, seers, prophets and real philosophers. They are our guides. They are our inspiration, the finger-posts that are placed in every corner of Humanity so that the dark mankind may receive a ray of light and steer themselves straight and reach the harbour of peace and immortality, the destined goal of human species on this earth.

India, this dear Mother Indja of ours, is today confronted with the terrible alternative. Either industrialise, mechanise, and militarize like a super-American or super-Soviet State and perish in her soul, or rediscover her immortal soul, her ancient and immortal wisdom, her perennial philosophy of life, and enhance and integrate it with the modern scientific and industrial achieve-

ments and live. Gandhiji is essentially a man of the Spirit, an indomitable will and immortal spirit within a frail body, made strong and adamantine through practiced virginity and purity of thought and intentions. Gandhijis, Tagores and Vivekanandas, are rare pearls which should adorn our national crown, rare birds, which should be jeolously preserved in our sanctuaries, for it is they who have given us words of spirit and wisdom, who have borne the torch of Indian wisdom lit in a world given to violence, thoughtlessness and selfish cooperative suicide.

Pandit Nehru, on that ever-memorable day of 15th August proclaimed to the people of India : "On this day our first thoughts go to the architect of this freedom, the Father of our nation who, embodying the old spirit of India, held aflame the torch of freedom and lighted up the darkness that surrounded us. We have often been unworthy followers of his and have strayed from his message and bear the imprint of their hearts of this great son of India, magnificent in his faith and strength and courage and humility. We shall never allow that torch of freedom to be blown out, however high the wind or stormy the tempest".

Now is come the time for all Indians, worthy of their royal citizenship of this Aryavartia, of this ancient Bharat, this Hindustan Hamara, to shed all fears and sense of helplessness and despondency, all covetousness and mean grabbing-instinct, of disruptive lusts after power and pleasures, and to help themselves and their immortal land to reach the heights that are her due. India of ours should grow and never fade, should reach up to the heavenly heights and not descend unto the infernal abyss. We need unity, discipline, disinterestedness, living faith and strong convictions. We need dreams, ideals and highest aspirations. We should achieve ; we should do our job. We should make this land of Buddhas and Sankaras, Asokas and Akbars, Tagores and Gandhis, an ideal Republic, the ideal heaven on earth, the land of gods and goddesses of inner freedom, mental purity and social justice, economic equity and political progress. This the India of our dreams ; this *Hindustan Hamara*.

CHAPTER V

NATION-BUILDING

After the thirteen day national mourning was over, Bharat and Fatima left again to finish their village-to-village tour programme. This time they went together and reached Lahore, still red with the communal blood. Near the Moti Masjid they saw streams of beggars and refugees, and that temple-throne, once used by Rangit Singh, became the asylum for those helpless victims of the communal riots. The communal propaganda, so cleverly done by the power-politicians of the communalist organisations, supported by the open and secret encouragement of the British, has really sapped the very vitals of nationalist India. Communal cancer is still there, often in its most virulent form, threatening to drag India down into the barbarism of the Dark Ages.

They toured extensively in the Punjab, Sind, N. W. F. Province, Kashmir, U. P., Behar, Bengal, Orissa, Bombay, Madras, Assam and the States. Everywhere poverty, squalour, ignorance and helplessness were the lot of the common man. The first anniversary of the Independence Day was over, and yet there was hardly anything done by the National Government of the Indian Union, both at the Centre and in the Provinces, to enthuse the people, to arouse them from their slumber, to incite them to rise to the occasion and shoulder the great responsibilities that are theirs after the Independence Day. It is true the Government of India was confronted with huge problems to solve when Independent India was still in her cradle, problems which might have caused *coup d'etat* a hundred times in a country like France. Yet the Congress Government have survived, which is in itself a great achievement. Then the Indian States problem was practically solved except the Kashmir tangle. They have produced a fairly good democratic Constitution for Free India. They have met half way the refugee problem. They have made at least paper schemes and flowery speeches about the great economic, educational and social developments that should take place in India.

On the other hand, the mighty Congress, which derived its soul and mission through intense nationalism and self-sacrifice, is

today losing ground because of a vague internationalism of the Nehruian type on the one hand, and the self-indulgence of many self-conceited Congress leaders on the other. The spirit that killed Mahatma Gandhi is alive, and as long as that spirit is alive, the noble ideals of self-sacrifice, nationalistic heart-beat, ideals of profound humanity and service, recede to the background. India is at cross-roads. She has now, after Gaudhiji's death, the following alternatives. (1) Americanize the country with intense industrialisation and accept a kind of cheap positivist and pragmatic philosophy of life. (2) Accept Wardha Scheme and Gandhism in their entirety and grow upon a profoundly idealistic basis. (3) Each group and individual seeking their own selfish interests at the expense of the greater and larger interests of the nation, whether that larger interests of the nation be based upon the Western pattern of industrialisation, miltarization and power politics, or of the Eastern pattern which asserts the supremacy of the soul over the body, of spirit over matter, and subordinates the blessings of Science and Industry to serve, and not dominate, the positive and constructive needs of the Nation and of Humanity at large. In either case, we need discipline, self-sacrifice and control of the inherent and self-destructive trends of individualism in India. National discipline is the need of the hour.

The great nation-building task cannot be undertaken as long as our isolationist spirit of narrow individualism persists in Indian society. Each one for all, all for each, is the ideal. The ideal order of the society will always remain utopian; but it is up to us to reach the nearer we can to the ever-growing and ever-widening ideals of human and Indian perfection. The present narrow individualism of the Indian society is deplorably disruptive as the national interests and the social good are all subordinated to the interests of a handful privileged classes in our society. Not birth, but the intrinsic merit of the citizen will have to decide who is to ascend to the higher order in the hierarchy of values and who have to be on the lower planes of sex and money.

Unrestricted and selfish individualism runs counter to all national growth. The collective consciousness, the nation-sense, and, above all, that subordination of the individual interests to the interests of the nation are still to be achieved. To look a little beyond the individual and see the family, a little beyond the family

and see the clan, to look beyond the clan and see the tribe, to look beyond the tribe and see the race, to look beyond the race and see the society and the state, and look still beyond the national state and see Humanity or the World State, is the path we have to pursue. This grand ideal is in our race-consciousness ; but it has been discovered and ventilated but by a few representative Indians. This grand idea needs further elucidation and propaganda so that the common man, the ordinary citizen, of Free India may be enabled to feel it, sense it, and abide by it.

In this up-hill march which India is to embark upon now, every citizen has to give up the idea of self-interest and self-indulgence and consecrate his or her life to national service. Like Gandhiji, the greatest prophet of India's freedom, the architect of Indian nation, the Father of Young India, the citizens have to live dangerously hour by hour, risking social insecurity and launching into the ideal dreams which the Fathers of the Indian nation have fondly cherished. The great lesson of self-sacrifice which Mahatmaji taught us cannot be obliterated nor left behind by the present and future builders of the Nation, knowing that everything great, creative and lasting springs from the thorough effacement of our tiny ego and replacing it with high ambitions and dreams. There is no limit to the capacity to do, achieve and create for a man, a citizen, who has sacrificed his self, and abides by godly ideals and dreams. Mahatmaji's greatest blood sacrifice in New Delhi will perpetually remain as the seed of the Indian nation, that innocent blood shed for the redemption of many. A prophet, seer, high-priest, Mahatma Gandhi will continue to be an ideal and a pattern for the youths of India who have to build India brick by brick, and enable this ancient, venerable, immortal Motherland of ours to grow, develop and expand to all the corners of the world.

With these thoughts in mind, Bharat, came out of Dayal Bhag, Agra, where a venerable beard came and greeted him in these words : "Your thoughts now I read through my self-realised vision. India, if she remain India, must grow according to the patterns set by Netaji, Gandhiji and Tagore. Deny not your national soul, nor discard the pangs of the Divine Mother. After the economic development, try to encourage creative thinking and education in free India." Then the mystery man disappeared.

Bharat walked down and came across a *padri saheb* who was preaching in the street. He was preaching himself and his particular church, but not Christ and his Asiatic, universal, Gospel. The missionary was a Belgian Jesuit, who, behind all the Jesuitical rhetoric, created a spirit and mentality among his Christian converts that made them completely denationalised. The Semitic religions, Islam and Christianity, in India have sapped much of that creativity and freshness of life from us. To the catholic and all-embracing genius of the Indo-Aryans they replied with their exclusive, narrow, static and stagnant versions of the message of Jesus and Muhammed. India opens her arms to the Korans and Bibles ; but the Bibles and Corans close the doors to the Vedas and Pitakas.

The Belgian Jesuit and Bharat talked for a while and at the end they discovered that there was a radical difference that divided them once for ever. The Belgian Jesuit, inspite of his erudition and liberal-mindedness, was essentially the official spokesman of the official Church of Rome, where the heterogeneous mixing took place between the Aryan Christ and the Semitic Judaism. Although the personality of Christ reached such divine summits of perfection that he transcended the limitations of the Aryan and the Semite, yet the blood in his veins was in all probability Aryan although his mother and supposed father were both Semites.

The young Belgian Jesuit, who, as a student in Calcutta University took pains to study Bengali, after hearing the sincere convictions of Bharat, remarked : "*Man like you, specially Christians who hold your views, must be shot*".

Bharat : Yes, if the present Catholic Church uproot India's national heritage, you will set up inquisition. Shooting is today what the inquisition fires were in the Middle Ages. Although we will fight tooth and nail to preserve the essential traits of our national genius and culture, we continue to believe that the Catholic Church, really rooted in, growing upon, our national heritage can do wonders in India, Asia and the world. Now listen to the story of the Catholic Church in India.

CATHOLIC CHURCH IN INDIA

Of all the Christian churches in India the Catholic Church is the best. According to tradition, India got the message of Jesus Christ through one of his own disciples, St. Thomas, who after evangelizing in Persia, entered India. His missionary tours brought him down to Cranganore in Travancore, where in the year 52 A. D. he founded seven churches, ordained priests and consolidated the first proselytes to Christianity. Then he preached the gospel of Jesus in the Coromandel Coast, where, after many sufferings and ordeals, he was crowned with the palm of martyrdom, somewhere near Mylapore, towards the year 70 A. D. Devoted Christians of Malabar and Madras even to this day pay homage to the supposed tomb of this Apostle of Christ. The Mar-Thionites of Malabar claim to be in direct lineal descent from the first Christians of St. Thomas. There is an apocryphal Gospel entitled : "Acts of Judas and Thomas," which bears testimony to these and other activities of the Apostle. The great German critic, A. Harnack, seems to favour the authenticity of that gospel. Nothing more could be ascertained about the apostolic origin of the Church in India.

Whatever be the historical truth behind these traditions, it is certain that a flourishing Christian community existed in Travancore towards the end of the third century. Pautenus of Alexandria, sent to India in the year 180 A. D., found the Malabar Christians in possession of the Gospel of St. Matthew. Sapor II, King of Persia (313-381), violently persecuted the Christians of his kingdom as a result of which many of them fled for their lives and came and sought shelter among the hospitable Indians of Malabar. Thomas Cana led a large number of Syrian Christians and came to Travancore in the year 340 and their rites and traditions are still preserved intact in Malabar today. A Greek sailor named Cosma reached South India in the year 522 and had left us some testimony regarding the flourishing state of the Church in Ceylon and Malabar Coast, "where pepper grows in abundance."

Leaving aside other desultory and unauthenticated sources that furnish us with more information about the early Indian Church, let us hasten to the Middle Ages and modern times to

complete a bird's-eye-view of the historical pictures of the Christian churches in India.

Pope Callixtus II conferred pallium on Mar Giovannes of India in 1122, which is a clear proof that the ecclesiastical authority was slowly being handed down to Indian hands. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the Domenicans and Franciscans went to South India and founded new churches. The Domenican Order, founded by the Spanish scholar, apostle and saint, Dominic of Guzman, was an aristocratic, intellectual and highly cultured confraternity, whereas the Franciscans, the followers of the great Italian mystic, Francis of Assisi, were active, practical and popular leaders of the Christian people. The Domenicans of Malabar had some of the finest educational institutions which are even to our own days a characteristic feature of that illustrious Order. The University of Manila in the Philippines is a standing proof today to their educational activities and intellectual apostolate in the mission lands. In 15th century the intense missionary campaign bore such fruits that there were once 25,000 Christian families under the jurisdiction of one single Syrian Bishop, Mar Giovannes, residing at Cranganore. A few of the Franciscan and Domenican missionaries suffered martyrdom, mostly at the hands of the Moslems. Domenico Nola of Pistoia, Giacomo di Padova and Pietro da Sienna are the leading names among the martyrs of the Middle Ages. On their blood was erected the South Indian Catholic Church and was thus fulfilled also in India the well-known dictum of Tertullian: "The blood of martyrs is the seed of Christianity."

The arrival of Vasco De Gama in Calicut with six Franciscan missionaries in the year 1498 inaugurated the modern age in the history of Christian missions. The churches in Cochin, Canganore and Goa (under Albuquerque) owe their origin and inspiration to these pioneering messengers of peace and love coming from Latin Europe. The appearance of St. Francis Xavier on the scene, one of the first disciples of Ignatius Loyola and the greatest missionary of the Society of Jesus, was a new strength and a renewed impetus to the missionary enterprise. With the generous help of John III, king of Portugal, Francis Xavier managed to raise the spiritual fervour of both the European and Indian Christians of Goa to the maximum pith and found new centres of missionary efforts

among the Paravars near Cape Comerin and in Travancore. His missionary enterprise extended to Malacca and Japan and while trying to land in China he died on the island of Hiang Shang on 3rd Dec. 1552, as Moses breathed his last seeing before his eyes the promised land. Missionaries like Antonio Criminalis, Roberto de Nobili and Matteo Ricci followed the suit of Francis Xavier. While in Goa even the Indian Christians were Europeanised, on Madura, Vellore and Golganda, the spheres of missionary activity of De Nobili, even the European missionaries were Indianised. De Nobili was the first of modern missionaries who penetrated behind the veil and, understanding the background of Indian civilisation, stood for complete Indianisation of the Gospel message, one absorbing and integrating the other. Later on missionaries like Baldassore de Costa, Francis Laynez, Giovanni Brito and Abbe Dubois consolidated the missions in the Carnatic, Maylapore and other centres in the South on the line of adaptation launched by Roberto De Nobili.

During the last four centuries many religious and missionary societies of the Catholic Church have sent their workers to all parts of India and the Catholic Church was organised on an all-India basis. During the last two centuries the work of the missions, in its religious, social, educational, humanitarian and even economico-political aspects, is well organised on a solid basis. Today there are over 50 ecclesiastical units (dioceses and vicariates), dividing up India within the framework of the canonical hierarchy. They have organisational efficiency, financial support, man-power, well-trained and fully-equipped missionary personnel of either sex. The Church has attracted the notice and sympathetic consideration of many of the leading politicians of India today. The Church has a hold not only on, what they call, "rice Christians", but also on some of the most intelligent sections of the Indian community. Certainly the Catholic Church has potential power to adapt herself to the changing conditions of India and really and effectively help our people towards their real happiness, both material and spiritual.

The history of the Protestant Churches is perhaps better known, because they have been far more dynamic and daring than the Catholics. Let it be only said here that the Danish missionaries like Zeigenbalg (1683-1819), Bartholomaeus, Frederich Schwartz,

have had their share in awakening Christian consciousness in India. The history of the Serampore missionaries, men like William Carey, Marshal and Ward mark a new period in the history of the non-Conformist groups of Protestantism. The London Missionary Society, the Church Missionary Society, the American Methodist Mission and several other smaller and minor sects and organisations from the Protestant world found their way to various parts of India and made their influence felt in some part of the country or other. The history of the Scotish missions and the personality and educational activities of Alexander Duff have also been a notable contribution to India. The names of the great Protestant missionaries in contemporaneous India, men like C. F. Andrews, Nicol MacNicol and Stanley Jones, should also be borne in mind as we proceed along to consider the present position and future prospects of the Christian Church in this ancient land.

Although Protestant subjectivism and individual freedom and the Catholic social consciousness and objective authoritarianism are both needed for an integrated concept of historical Christendom, yet, I feel sure, that any critical study of the history of the Church should convince us of the profound truth of what Card. J. H. Newman had said in his *Apologia*, that "if Christianity is historical, it is undoubtedly Roman Catholicism". It is only there, that we find the organic growth of the gospel seed, integrated and enhanced by Greek Philosophy, Jewish Prophecy and Roman Law. All the various systems of thought and religious beliefs and practices found a natural home in the Catholic Church, to which was incorporated all that was best in every history, every culture, that came within the orbit of the Roman Empire. Harnack says in his History of Dogma that even the Apostolic Age was a "pre-Catholic introductory stage". The Roman Empire agitated by Jewish Messianism and Pauline apostolate contained the germs of the Catholic Church. Had not Paul become "a Jew to the Jews, a Greek to the Greeks, a Gentile to the Gentiles", the Church would have faded out of history as a mere sect of Judaism. But the Apostolic Age was so sur-charged with universalising forces that even Ignatius Martyr spoke of "the Catholic Church"*(ad Smyrn. 8). In fact, it was the Catholicity inherent in the gospel of Jesus, and so ably propounded by the Apostles and the Fathers of the Church, that made Christianity triumphant in the Roman Empire,

utterly defeating its rival religion, Mitraism. The genius of the Catholic Church consists precisely in this capacity to grow with the growing age, to change with the changing needs of the people. Yet it is deeply rooted in human nature and is hence really universal—which is the meaning of the Greek word, 'catholicos'—, transcending the limitations of race, clime, sect or time. Even today this international and supra-sectional feature is easily discernible in the Catholic Church, notwithstanding its Ultramontanism, dogmatic crystalisation, priesthood, official narrowing down of Catholicism to Italianism, legalism, formalism and, what is far worse, into a definitely closed and walled religion like many other sectarian religions of history.

If the Catholic Church is to have any lasting and really regenerating influence in India she must look back to her heroic, glorious and romantic past. She must learn humility and wisdom from the dark chambers and blood-stained altars in the Catacombs. She must recall those days when the foresight and wisdom of the great pillars of the Church accepted, embraced and enhanced the great cultural heritage of Greece, when on a living faith in "Jesus and Him crucified" the learned and the unlearned, Gentile and the Jew, the freeman and the bondslave, all could join hands as brothers and sisters of the same Jesus, as children of the same Father. What we learn from the pages of Church history is that the gospel of Jesus grew, bearing flowers and fruits, on the natural genius of a given people, of a given nation. That is how Christianity was accepted in France, Germany, England, among the Slaves and all other countries that form part of the great Christian world. But alas! we see here in India, the Catholic Church, although planted over a thousand years ago, is still an exotic plant, far removed from the living traditions and national genius of the Indian people. The prelates of the Catholic hierarchy in India are far more reactionary, unprogressive and stereotyped than they are in Europe. What a heaven-wide gulf that exists between the leaders of the French Catholic thought today and the Catholics in India! The Bishop and Archbishops, whom I had often contacted, wear golden crosses only around their necks, but not in their hearts. Most of them have neither the necessary scholarship nor, what is infinitely more important, that prophetic vocation and saintly life. Christ-likeness is the only

criterion needed to discern a Christian. But in India everything should be subservient to their Canon Law. The law-intoxicated bishops make men exist for law and not law for men. Which is greater : Sabbath or man ? Jesus has said : "Sabbath exists for man and not man for the Sabbath".

The great majority of the Indian clergy, even those who are "Rome-returned", are far more removed from the living soul of Indian civilisation, and from the right understanding of the various trends of life and thought in the modern world, than their foreign colleagues. The manuals of scholastic philosophy and theology with "*nihil obstat*" are hardly of any use outside the four walls of their seminary compound. The teaching of these subjects in Latin is an added burden to over 90% of the Indian scholastics. After seven or eight years of training when they come out they forget their Latin books, metaphysical subtleties and mental gymnastics and are confronted with a world which they were not prepared to face. Unless there is personal sanctity and purity to sustain them, they are good neither for the Church nor for the society, with all the hard trials and struggles of life. No wonder, then, that they fall back on to the line of least resistance, to the side of social security and social status. No wonder that they think of their religion with communal bias. This communal cancer is sapping the vitality of the Catholic Church, especially in the South. Merely consecrating a dozen Indian bishops at a time or introducing Indian terminology would not solve the problem. What is needed for the thoughtful and intelligent section of the Catholic Church is to delve deep into the inner meaning of Indian culture and to plunge unconditionally and unreservedly into the psycho-spiritual ocean of India's cultural heritage. Then the Gospel of Jesus will be congenial to India and really bear fruits by resuscitating the dead and infusing faith in the fading limbs of millions of human beings throughout the length and breadth of India.

The spiritual weakness and mental vaccum of many ecclesiastical dignitaries made them to side with the stronger party, the British Government. Although many of the English Protestant missionary organisations were but shameful tools in the hands of the Government to further their imperial interests, the attitude and policy of the Catholic Church is not entirely free from cowardice and failure. The Catholics of Malabar are so

communal-minded that they can hardly ever think of interdining, intermarrying or even winning Indian independence at the sacrifice of their communal interests. The present struggle between Sir C. P. Ramaswami Ayer and the Catholics of Travancore is partly due the high-handedness and autocracy of the learned Dewan of Travancore and partly due to the communal cancer of the Catholics themselves. In Europe the communal claims of the Catholic Church clashed with the ideals of a modern State and were defeated. Indian Catholics were not only removed from, but even opposed to, our nationalist struggle, far estranged from the spirit and sufferings of the Congress. The laudable example of some nationalist Catholics in Bombay is but an exception. Now there is a slow move from some diplomatic quarters of the Catholic Church to side with the Congress, as now not only Britain but also the whole world has recognised the Congress as the most representative mouthpiece of the Indian Nation. A really strong and naturalised Church needs no legal protection for its faith. Only a shallow, shabby and slippery institution need so many man-made laws and safeguards for its protection. It is well known that the Congress is only too considerate to the legitimate claims and interests of the minorities and there was no need for the Church to play such an opportunist game.

The Catholic Church, that condemned Tyrell and Loisy in Europe, condemned Brahmapandav Upadyaya in India and that is the symbol of her self-condemnation, and a clear proof that the Church authorities are far removed from discerning the times and the shape of things that are to come. What is the use of buying or borrowing a few hundreds of labelled Christians here and there ? I consider one single representative Christian like Upadyaya to be of greater value than the mass conversions in the Chota Nagpur district or among the Anglomaniac Christians in the Khasi Hills. Mere number does not mean much, but quality and character of the Indian Christians. "Thou hast increased the number, but not joy of thy people", laments Isaias.

Call this "criticism" or "appreciation", in the sense you define these terms. But as far as I am concerned, it is only my love and admiration for the Church that constrain me to criticise her mercilessly. Once St. Peter said to Jesus : "To whom shall we go, because thou hast words of Eternal Life". These are the

words I myself repeat in my solitary moments, in the heart of my heart, while comparing the Catholic Church to other institutional religions of history. Ceasars and Napoleons are all gone; empires rise and fall like the waves of the sea; but the Catholic Church will survive even the hardest trials that may still lie ahead of her. Hands of Providence are guiding the barge of Peter afloat on the Sea of Life. In fact, many among the leaders of European thought today are looking back to the undivided Christendom of the Middle Ages with some sort of nostalgia. Many leaders of the Protestant Churches would long for, some of them would seek for, a reunion with Rome. That is very true with the Church of England. In India the leaders of the United Churches' Scheme for all Protestant Churches would gladly throw their lot with the Catholic Church, either on the basis of co-operation or re-union. Nay, even the Indian Theistic Churches, like the Arya Samaj and the Brahmo Samaj, can continue to survive only when they are re-organised on the Roman Catholic pattern, or are affiliated to the Catholic Church. But unfortunately the Catholic Church in India is not Catholic enough, and hence the alternative for the Church is either to quit India or to become Indian. The best of Indian Catholics feel, as Upadyayaji did, a sense of dichotomy, a sense of divided loyalty, which can be bridged and harmonised only in a truly Indian Catholic Church. We cannot close our eyes to the great revelations of the Orientalists, to the new world made known to us by scholars of comparative study of religions and by the critical study of the origins of Christianity, the scientific temper of the age and other factors which need unbiased examination and open-minded reception, mostly from the part of the Catholic Church. Merely fulminating anathemas and excommunications is no answer to the crying needs of human hearts.

Catholic Church is history *par excellence* as Buddhism is pre-eminently psychology. One needs integration with the other. There is hardly any organisation in history that has got a greater or a more divine mission than that of the Catholic Church. The ignorance of her priests, their unnatural and anti-psychological training, their lists of forbidden books and forbidden fruits, their substitution of humility and wisdom of the Cross with the power and diplomacy of the ecclesiastical dignitaries, and a hundred other plagues—five of which were amply dealt with by the Italian

philosopher-priest, Antonio Rosmini,—are to be exposed and bitterly criticised, because any historian, any God-seeker, must love the Catholic Church, the safest arc of salvation in this world of deluge and destruction, in this *kali yuga*. I, for myself, must confess that I owe what is best in me to the Catholic Church truly wedded to Indian culture. Let the Church be warned of flatterers and traders in religion, and from those officials and coronists and liturgists who would discard or set aside the most elementary law of “love of God above everything else and of our neighbour as ourselves” in the name of Dogmatic Theology, Canon Law, Vatican Decrees and the bureaucratic machinery and vested interests of the Church.

Let the Church grow on the national and natural genius of India as she once grew on the national genius of ancient Greece and ancient Rome. Then the present bureaucracy will change, a change necessitated by the changing phases of man and his history. Let the Church authorities analyse and study the psychological make-up of our great leading men of this century, men like Ram Mohan Roy, Ramakrishna, Vivekananda, Gandhi and Tagore, Upadyaya and Sadu Sunder Singh, and accept what is best in them, and not close themselves up within their dogmatic formulae. Man is free and he should be subservient to none except immortal God. Let them study our Vedas, Upanishads and Vedantas as they study their Bible or the definitions of the Church. Extend your catholic hands to us and we will join hands with you, but be Catholic enough as to be able to sing with Tagore :

“Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free,

Where the world has not been broken up into fragments by
narrow domestic walls,

Where words come out from the depths of Truth,

Where tireless striving stretches its arm towards perfection,

Where the clear stream of reason has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sands of dead habit,

Where the mind is led forward by thee into ever-widening
thought and action,

Into that Heaven of freedom, Father, let my country awake”.

The awakening of national consciousness of the Indian people, the growing sense of self-respect and love of inner freedom, the growing influence of Buddhism, Vedanta and Yoga in the Universities of

the West, the gradual decline of many western countries, plunged into, and plunging others in, war and violence, the unregenerated attitude of the ecclesiastical authorities, specially in India, make one doubt whether the Catholic Church can ever win to her fold the really thoughtful and representative Indians. If the Church fail, it will be due to the lack of that all-embracing universality, of that real, true and lasting catholicity. But let us wait and see.

The Jesuit : You are bringing a distorted history. You are a satan transforming yourself into an angel of light. You should not discuss about the faith the Church teaches. Disobedient men like you must be shot.

Bharat : Shot again ! You, a supposed representative of Christ, using this language ?

Jesuit : Christ would have condemned you to hell ; "to be shot", is a milder term ; for it is right to shoot those heretics who kill the souls of men by opposing the Church.

Bharat : Oriental Christ, not only of Pratap Chandra Mozumdar, but of all saints, mystics, free minds and emancipated souls of both the East and the West, will triumph, not your sectarian dogmatism and blind imposition and inquistional fires. Although in our nation-building task Jesus Christ and historical Christianity have much to contribute, we maintain that that contribution should be inested to our national soul and cultural roots. Christian churches, like the British political domination and economic exploitation, are uncongenial to India, unless they grew naturally on our national roots. So they have to quit unless all missionaries become as many C. F. Andrewses and serve the real interests of this country and Humanity.

Jesuit : So we are on the parting of ways.

Bharat : Quite. Yes, I do mean it. But you will be allowed to work in your own way and we will work in our own way ; only what is fittest and healthiest will survive in this struggle for existence. Hinduism, in its essentials, will and must live in India. Hinduism is the soul of India. India is the body of Hinduism, the one being inseparable from the other without killing both. Neither Islam nor Christianity can survive, true to Indian soil, without being Hinduised.

So saying, the white *padri saheb* and the stern Indian nationalist bade good-bye to each other and left for good.

EMANCIPATION OF OUR WOMENFOLK

Wherever Bharat and Fatiima toured about in India, the sad plight of the fairer sex became clearer. It looked as though women-folk were made only for the enjoyment of men, to bear and rear up children. In big cities and towns prostitution is rampant. The silent sighs of the womenfolk are unrecorded : their slavery is still to be got rid off. With their economic self-sufficiency and independence our walking goddesses, our beautiful womenfolk, will also regain their free, equal and honourable place in the domestic and social life. Whatever be the ideals of Indian womanhood, as expounded in our *shastras* and in the ancient period of Indian history, the present facts reveal the animalish and merely vegetative level our menfolk have been reduced to by their domineering over the womenfolk, reducing them to subjection, dependence and slavery, to humiliation and misery.

In a free and independent India the number of births will have to be decreased, not through artificial birth control clinics, as they are now being imported from the West into our big cities, the plague-spots of India, but through reasoned self-discipline and creative canalisation of sex energy. There is little hope until one has been fully freed from the trammels of lust, although sex, in its artistic and philosophic sense, can be a perennial source of living inspiration to all. But the crude, animalish and procreative sense of sex, centering around the cruder sense of touch, is what is most prevalent in India. Romanticism in India today is rare when compared to the West, where the social texture, as bestowed by the Greco-Roman-Christian civilisation, makes life worth living. I feel the greatest contribution of Western civilization to India will precisesly be in social living and in the scientific development of industry and agriculture. India must leave all her doors open to all rays of light that can enlighten her from any corner of the globe, from any nation, race or culture.

The crude concept of sex, in its purely animalish sense, should be got over. Whatever be the religious labels of peoples, the problem is not to make one a Hindu, Christian or Moslem, but to make humans out of animals. Woman, the Mother and the Sweetheart, should be redeemed from the trammels of lust. She will regain her *swaraj* with her economic independence and equal

opportunities and comradeship with man. Monogamy is the only law of the moral man, but promiscuity and union at will with anyone, anywhere, is the law of the animal man. State legislation, philosophy, religions, all must tend to make us humans out of animals. Neither individuals nor society can be happy by lowering themselves to brute level, disregarding the intrinsic nature of our mental and moral make-up.

The nemesis that bites our youth for the sins of senseless social customs of early marriage, city-wide prostitution, the effeminacy and lustful greed of the monied few in the country, so vitally ruin the life of the Nation. Yet only the spiritual acumen of the emancipated few can redeem that. Prostitution—I mean the clandestine and the luxury of the rich and the greedy, and not the poor inmates of the bawdy houses—will go, when the present power of money goes. Money goes when capitalism is destroyed, as Marx conclusively proves in his *Manifesto of 1848*. In India slavery of the womenfolk has become unbearable and we need ensure their freedom while building up young India anew on a sound national basis.

There is no country in the world where the ideal of womanhood reached such heights as in India ; yet there are few countries where womenfolk suffered so much, degraded to such extent, enslaved so brutally, as in India. In the ideal plane woman is *devi* or goddess. Excepting the worship of Madonna in the Catholic Christianity, there is no other country where woman found such a high place both in religion and philosophy as in India. Durga, Kali, Parvati, Saraswati and Tara are but the top-ranking deities of the Indian pantheon, objects of adoration, worship and love for the Indian heart. Through woman entered the first sin in the world ; and redemption also comes through woman. Eros or sex is the path to infernal abyss, but the same is also the raft of salvation, way to redemption. To those who transmute sex into pure love is promised the kingdom of God ; to those who succumb and make use of sex—man or woman—for sexual gratifications and mind-clouding vulcano and will-weakening lust, Eros is the road to death. Woman is death to the dead men of sex, life and love she is to men of life and chaste modesty. The sex-drowned men are the *asuras*, and the *asuras* are killed by the Mother's sword. Kali avenges *Mohishāsuras*, the wicked men ; but she showers blessings to the *sadhus*, to the good, holy, pure, heroic, romantic, idealistic, crea-

tive minds everywhere, at all times, under all climes. Woman is Mother Nature ; Nature is the real God of creation. Woman is the Universal Love, Beauty and Bliss of Creation ; Man is, at the most, Thought and Truth of the universe. Sex is the original sin in Christian theology, the *maya* in Vedantic philosophy ; but sex is also the divine redemption, the real God of the Universe. Sex, when sublimated is pure Love, God, Consciousness ; when succumbed to, or drowned into, sex is death, dirt, filth, degradation, disease, dart and pathway to infernal abyss.

Freedom of womenfolk is the real test of man's freedom, of the nation's freedom. Freedom is not license ; emancipation of womenfolk does not mean in any way the present, thoughtless, stolid, free-mixing and refined sexual gratifications of the western countries ; it means restoring woman to her dignity, honour and sanctity. Woman is mother, sister, daughter ; she is love, sweetheart, bliss. She is not merely a child-producing machine, as unfortunately woman is reduced to in our world today, specially in India where the crudest, bluntest and most brutal side of sex-thralldom of woman, in the form of child marriage, bigamy, polygamy, country-wide prostitution, purdha and the veil, and a hundred other disabilities and servitude, exists even today. Down goes the individual or the society that has not seen God's embodiment of love, beauty, grace and love in a woman. Woman is Nature, the universal womb of all born-beings, the *Hiranayagharba* of the Vedas. Man, according to the laws of Nature, is born to reach his life-goal through woman. Woman is *Sakti*, the power of God ; the manifestation of Brahman. Through *Sakti Sadhana* is reached higher planes of mystician and religious realisation not only in Saivism, but also in the purest schools of Bhakti and Vaishnavism. Sakti is the common link between both, the Sivites and Vaishnavites of India, between man and woman, finite and the infinite. Sex, that is the instrument of fall is thus made use of as the weapon to conquer the palm of life, to win the battle of life. Through sex-sublimation or *sakti* cult, through philosophy or religion, we need reach the goal and stop not still we reach it. Says Jesus : "Let not him who seeketh cease until he findeth ; and when he findeth he shall wonder, wondering he shall enter the Kingdom, entering the Kingdom he shall be at peace".* But hard-

* Oxyrhynchus papyrus, 6541.

heartedness, cruelty, loss of hearing and eye-sight, change of women and insensibility are all seen with our own eyes, experienced with our own hearts, when sex is uregulated. Every unregenerate man changes his first love for a more beautiful and youthful girl, no matter whether he is bound by the bonds of wedlock or not. He is moved by the instincts and urges of the moment. He has no set principles or rules to guide him. If there are rules, he is too weak and cannot abide by them for any considerable length of time.

God bestows upon man His light and guidance ; His whispering is clearer and gentler than the love-songs of the sweetheart in our ears. But the hour of temptation comes, all God's warnings are left aside, and man stoops to sin, indulges in sensuality and satisfy sexual cravings, devising ways and means to intensify and increase his sexual pleasures. A man is poor ; with the few rupees he has in his pocket he should feed his family and nourish his frail limbs, but he cannot go without his sexual gratification. He is sick, on the verge of final breakdown. Tuberculosis is consuming his being, venereal diseases threaten to dishonour and degrade him ; but he must have his last cups of sexual pleasures full. He falls, revels and rolls in the mire.

But bawdy houses are both the pathway to hell and the door to the kingdom of heaven. Among the prostitutes are also angels who are there just to keep their body and soul together, some with finest intellect, with the subtler natural powers awakened and initiated in the secret mysteries of life. Why has the society disgraced the demimonds and harlots ? They are in a way greater public benefactors than many honoured and public professions in the society. More useful, necessary and natural than priests and doctors are the prostitutes in a society. In the the East this profession has been rendered most refined in some aristocratic quarters, where, strumpets through their professional training and, experience, receive only refined minds, and sing melodius songs and dance and give the rapture of the Infinite Bliss to their lovers. Most refined, genuine and true love is often found in them. They are young, beautiful and intelligent. Not for money, but for love they court with their lovers. They receive inspiration from the story of Radha and Krishna, Siva and Parvati, Rama and Sita and many other symbolic representations of the gods and goddess of Hindu mythology, from Solomon's Song of Songs in the Bible.

In their love they think and say that where love abounds there is *Brindavan*; where God's love is realised through human love there is *Sundervan*. It is worthwhile to note that for an intelligent youth, healthy and fair, whose heart has been broken down by worries or love-difficulties, there is nothing more soothing, nothing more curing and enlightening than to make friendship with those rare angels of light in the garb of public prostitutes, if they fail to court with God.

Yet society has always condemned them and placed them on the lowest strata of social beings. Yet the civilised gentlemen, not satisfied with their wives and concubines, do not cease to run after every street girl they see. In India this sex-thirst acquires more importance, as here money is the standard of greatness. If there are a few who get freed from this mammon-worship and mammon-criterion, their number is so few that they are like dew drops in the vast sea of India's humanity. The so-called gentlemen, professors, politicians and lecturers of the University marry a beautiful, well-accomplished, girl. But when girls more beautiful than their wives are offered to them, or even when such damsels are seen at a distance, their hearts are troubled and they become faithless to their first love and soil their sacrosanct nuptial bed. A man may enjoy as much as he can; but the social conventions in India do not allow a woman to have her heart's desires fulfilled. She is condemned to the drudgery of the household duties and her noblest feelings are repressed, suppressed and martyred. As Bernard Shaw had said: "The home becomes a work-house for women and a prison for girls." The young girl-wife is widowed, deserted or cruelly treated; but she has nowhere to go, none to appeal to, for man is God in the popular Indian traditions, those orthodox traditions which condemned millions to the state of bitter and tragic helotage, the untouchables. For these social sins of Hinduism we are now reaping the fruits in the mutilation of our country and the relabelling of India's millions with Semitic religions and theology of creeds which have very little in common with the soul of India,—the denial of India's cultural heritage. When Hinduism has expurged itself of its social and legal sins, then shall the Moslem missionaries go their way and India will be redeemed of her soul-denying sins.

Woman is an eternal mystery to man and man a sealed book to woman. The more a man tries to understand a woman the

farther she flies away from his grasp. There is an indefinable something, some deep human reality, that touches and enchantsthe subtest fibres of human heart in the man-woman relations, which, however, are missed by vulgar minds but apprehended and realised by subtler brains and sensitive hearts. Women, then, can lead men either to infernal abyss and make them brutes, nay make them sink lower than the swinish scoundrels, or lead, guide and lift them up to the divine plane, to the vision and relish of the Infinite Reality within the heart of man, within the heart of woman, within the heart of this vast universe. But those poets and mystics who do make use of the feminine grace and Creation's charms as ladders to ascend to the Divine Reality and Love are so few that they are to be counted at the tip of the fingers. Hence, after reaching the divine summits, through the instrumentality of feminine grace and love, let none despise her; for she, who through her flesh and blood gave your first-birth, through her magic spell and charm, her sweetness and love, gave you your second birth, by which you are freed from the strings of *mara*, from the sins of sensuality and sexuality, from pettiness of mind and meanness of heart. Woman, then, is a pathway to both God and Satan. The wise discriminatig these, do not deny life, but accept it and make use of it as a ladder to assend to the heigher planes of divine life. The same may be inversely true of women in their relations with men, of girls with boys.

To a man woman is poetry; she is the embodiment of Art. Her hair, cheeks, lips and breast, her limbs and movements, are all worlds of poetry and art to subtler brains. Strangely enough, the greatest poets and mystics reached divine perfection through human love. Jalaluddin Rumi, Hafiz and Omar Khayyam, Shakespeare, Dante and Virgil, Kalidas, Vyasa and Valmiki, attained perfection through human love. For women-saints their dream is the ideal Hero; for men-saints their polar star is the ideal Virgin. Mirabhai's Ghirdhar Ghopal was the manly personification of Universal Love; so was the Christ of St. Agnes and Cecilia, the romantic love-martyers of the early church. Ecstatic love of St. Francis of Assisi gravitated towards maternal, graceful and loving aspect of the Cosmic Consciousness, with which he was consciously linked, and from where he received inexhaustible inspiration. In the Catholic Church, although

the canonical officials of the Church deny sexual life outside in its legal and matrimonial form, there is the grand ideal of the Virgin given to the people. The Virgin is holding her child; but Virgin she remains. She is the Blessed Virgin, thrice blessed by men and angels. She is the symbol of purity and virginity, the mother of God-Man. Isis and Adonis, the Virgin with the Child, the Father-Mother Spirit of the Universe, are the different names connoting the same Reality, the same Love, the same thrill and blissful experience of Life.

Super-consciousness of the individual soul of the Higher Self becomes most real and vital when it is once tasted. It grows in intensity and relish, growing sweeter, wider, deeper, every day. It becomes so real, so precious and dear to loving hearts of the self-realised men and women that even ingots of gold, most beautiful fairies, and everything which this world can offer or esteem as big and worthwhile, are freely left behind. Universal Consciousness, or Love Divine, holds one in its grip, enticing him all the time, enrapturing her in an infinite ocean of Bliss. To renounce lesser lights at the sight of Sempiternal Light is natural to us. That experience is vital and real; hence it can not be beaten by arid scholasticism or academic verbiage. The vital and experiential heart-experience of the Living Reality of human hearts cannot be beaten down by imprisonments, banishments or by a thousand atom bombs. You become unbeatable from every side, for your heart is one with the Love Divine, Cosmic Consciousness, the Supreme Reality, Ground of this universe. As a virgin offers herself, surrenders her heart and love, her mind and body, to the wooving embrace of her lover, so becomes our soul at the touch and embrace of the Universal Consciousness. Like a ship, while sailing along the zones where there are magnetic mines, is irresistibly drawn towards them, and is pulled to pieces which makes the whole vessel sink into the unfathomable depths of the blue ocean, so our little selves, when attracted by the magnet of Universal Consciousness, which destroys all egoism, pride and self-conceit, all hankering after little joys and pleasures, all that secret and hidden thirst after pleasures and fame, are drowned to be lost in the ocean of Reality, Truths-Beauty-Bliss. Then a man gets renewed and regenerated. What is religion but this inner transformation?

This is subjective regeneration. Complete subjectivity is the highest perfection granted to mortals to reach. But that is never reached as long as sex is used as a monstrous vessel for the perpetuation of evils in this world.

At the kiss of the Infinite all the bonds of fear, human respect, hankering after social security and deadening worries are lost. Man reaches perennial youth and growing consciousness. Death, then, becomes merely a laying aside of the decrepit body to pass into better regions and better skies. It is a passage unto immortality. Spirit never dies ; it never vaxes old. When doubts are settled and firmness of mind is attained then humans win perennial youth. Body is just a vehicle ; spirit is all-in-all. Individual mind and our ideas and emotional realisation of the living Reality of life are all what matter.

As a woman casts on man that charming spell and loving eyes, so courts and clings the individual consciousness with the Universal Being. St. Catherine of Sienna, St. John of the Cross Eckhart, Tauler, Suso, Ruyesbroeck and others call it spiritual marriage. Divine Love gives us cheer and undying smile and optimism ; it instills new hopes and new strength to face courageously all the trials and ordeals of our earthly pilgrimage. We should smile and play like little children, to whom belong God and His kingdom. A Saints' mind is serene, clear like a limpid pool. Imperturbable peace is his ; immortality is his ; ever-growing vision and ever-deepening consciousness are his. He acts without calculating, gives without counting the costs, fights without heeding the wounds. He never hesitates ; he never doubts. Supreme Reality has owned him as its own and he has been freed from the claws of mortal fiends and hoaxing spectres. He becomes unconquerable by conquering all. He is *Jina* ; he is really *Mahavira* ; he is Buddha, he is Christ, the Anointed of the Most High ; he is the Prophet, he is the Saviour, the Redeemer of mankind. As a graceful whore patiently and gently bears on her physical body the weakness and sins of menfolk, and redresses the woes of unfortunate women, fallen or sold to the lusts of men, so the Redeemer takes upon himself the sins of the world. He is the "Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world".*

Know, my friend, that India's climate, her multimillennial traditions treasured in her customs, art, architecture, music, and, above all, in her inimitable and richest religious and philosophical literature are the greatest gift to the modern world. India is deep Humanism, not that shallower type of the resurgent period as in the West, nor the type revealed in poets like Shelly, Byron, Gabriele D' Annunzio, but that deep mystical, humane, transcendental and experimental relish of the Divine Reality in man, of Human Reality in god. Many cave temples prior to the birth of Buddha which are in India's mountains and hills, proclaim aloud the unconquerable soul of India, a living monument to the spiritual victory of the Asiatic genius, perpetually commemorated in the conscience of men, women, students and savants, far more powerfully than the Tower of Victory, that proud monument that rises within the premises of the Fort of Chitor, amidst the ruins of its ancient and medieval glory, amidst the evergreen trees and shrubs, underneath the blue skies of *Hindustan hamara*.

India's spirit, dear friend, eludes definition or description, even as the experiential knowledge of God or the working knowledge of a woman's heart. India's genius and gift will always remain in the realm of Mind, of Spirit, of Reality. It will be now the duty of the younger limbs and powerful brains to defend the immortal legacy of India and save her from mere Americanisation or westernisation. The thoughtful among the western students look to this ancient land for light and guidance. The Harward University, the finest brains in Germany, the Huxleys and Romain Rollands, symbolise but the initial period of the awakening of the western thought, re-orientating itself again to the East, where the sun rises. *Lux ex oriente*. India is the foremost country where classical Perennial Philosophy has been taught more thoroughly, humanly and uninterruptedly for such a long time and in such a wider atmosphere than in any other country in the world. Herein lies the path of salvation for men and women of India and, indeed, of the world. But free woman from the lusts of men; free men from the fallacious seductions of women; redeem both man and woman in the knowledge, love and realisation of God.

CHAPTER VII

THIS OUR HINDUSTAN

The place where Bharat and Fatima met for the second time to exchange notes on their experiences was Deoghar, a small, but important, town in the Santal Parganas, in Bihar. The day was just breaking in the East as the slow-moving, smoky, train steamed into Deoghar Vaidyanath. Bharat and Fatima met there after nearly two years of separation and they had many tales to narrate.

After breakfast both the dreamers walked down to the magnificent Balananda Swami's temple, just outside the town. They did not spend more than a few minutes at the Vaidyanath temple itself, not only because it was dirty and filthy inside, but also they saw scenes which denied the religious soul of India. Just outside the temple there were pimps who pandered girls to Bharat in return for money. Inside there was buying and selling going on unchecked. A thousand Jesuses were needed to drive out those who profaned and besmeared the temple, ostensibly dedicated to the service of gods. How can people become or think clean thoughts when gods and goddess are represented almost everywhere in sexual moods and sex-*lingam*-symbols? Socrates complained against those poets who represented gods and goddesses with bestial passions and lust-scenes. Although even phallism may have some religious significance attached to it, most often, the obscene representations of gods and goddesses in crude sexual forms tend to degenerate rather than regenerate the masses. The contrast that exists between the Vaidyanath shrine and the Belananda Swami's temple is almost the same as that which exists between the filthy sacred city of Benares and the clean, up-to-date, Hindu University, just outside that Indian Rome, sacred Benares.

The young couples walked down a few miles and reached a solitary hill, not far off from Trikut, where they sat to talk, to think matters over, to reflect.

Bharat : Many a Lalgarh palaces I visited not only in Bikaner but also in Amber, Kashmir, Rajputana and elsewhere. But I

must confess I got disgusted with most of the Indian princes, who live mostly for their *harems* and royal treasures. Ignorant, and stupid are many of them. When I passed the romantic Jai Mahal on the Amber Road, a fair virgin, a celestial nymph, a new Urvashi,—as the *apsarasies* I once remember to have seen in the dark green lakes of Sat, Bhim and Naini Tals, up in the Kumaon Hills,—came down from the slow-winding river and, after her bath in the lake, just in front of the Mahal, dressed herself up most modestly and, looking at the rising sun, she began to sing :

Surya Dev namascar : your radiant rays kiss my gracious hills,
 Giving new vigour to the fading limbs of her daughters and sons
 You commanded me, blooming sun of my heart, to relinquish
 That royal throne which princes in Hindustan would replenish
 Their queens with. Simplicity I loved, in simplicity I'll die ;
 Hold me within your grasp and I know my bloom will never fade.
 Gods and goddess, and ye, Indra, Mitra, Varuna, come again
 To this ancient land, to the children of this divine land's horizon.
 Teach us again a hundred *Ramayanas*, *Mahabaratas*, *Puranas*,
 the crest-jewels of the *Upanishads* and *Ithihasas*,
 So that the fluid creativity of Indian genius may ever
 thrive and be never lost.

O Indra, India's lightning flash, you Brahman, the Supreme OM,
 I fall prostrate with lingering eyes and sighing heart
 Before th' immensity of this vast universe.

In simplicity and naturalness I discovered my national soul,
 O *Bharatvarsha*, limpid *Aryavarta*, *Hindustan hamara*,
 Your grace and charm, your divine pagan catholicity,
 Your immense variety, luxuriant green everywhere,
 Put new blood and life in me. O India my Goddess I adore you.
 Your sundry systems of philosophy, your cultural heritage,
 Your rishis and seers are enough for me in this life and the next.
 But today alas our big businessmen and princes,
 Those cheap politicians and interested demagogues,
 Get ready to sell or soil India's cultural heritage
 For cheap money, American big business or Indian filth.
 Let your divine sunshine never set in Indian horizon,
 Hold thou our feet lest into precipice we tumble headlong,
 Save us from the grinding wheels of soul-less machine-life,
 From the intoxication of sexual lust and glittering coins.

O divine sun, purify, cleanse, inspire, enthrall India's youth,
 Lead them on to the portals of immortality, with steadfastness,
 Undaunted will and Dharma-sense, which mark our civilisation
 at every stage.

Keep thy soul in me intact ; let from the silent dust arise
 Thousands more Asokas, Harshas and Paramahamsas,
 A thousand Sivajis, Akbars, Vestal Virgins and Ranjit Sings,
 A million Malaviyas, Gandhis, Radhakrishnans and Tagores.
 Give birth, my India dear, to creative genuises, Mother Pure,
 Many Mohammed Iqbals, Tatas and Birlas and Abdul Kalam
 Azads, Bankim Chandras, Valmikis and Tukarams,

So that India may grow integrated, well-balanced and poised,
 In both spirit and machine, in human values and matter,
 In body and soul. Let all the children of Hindustan grow
 In that wise tolerance universal, sympathy and unbounded love !

After singing this hymn, she veiled her angelic face, bowed
 down profoundly in humble adoration of the sacred land of
 her birth. Later she uttered the prayer, the Gayatri mantram :
*Om Bhur Bhuvaswa, Om Tat Savitur varenyam bhargo devasya
 dhimahi, dhiyo yo na prachodayat.* Then she sang the "Rama Rahim
 Krishna Karim...", which symbolised Kabir's and Nanak's and,
 in our days, of Gandhiji's attempt at Hindu-Muslim unity.

Fatima : O do continue. Where did she go afterwards ? What
 did that goddess do after her prayers ?

Bharat : She just disappeared. But listen. I'll tell you another
 incident which will continue the thread of the former lyric. I was
 walking alone just in front of the Old Fort when I saw a caravan
 passing by. Then behold...

Fatima : O Bharat, please tell me what is this Old Fort ?
 Where is it ? You leave me suspended. Please tell me more
 about it.

Bharat : The Old Fort I am referring to is the one at
 Bikaner. Tradition says that it was built by Raja Rai Sing, the
 foremost general of Akbar the Great. But it is now critically
 established that Raja Rai Sing only laid the foundation, but it was
 completed after Akbar's death in 1605. There is a huge cannon
 placed in front of the Fort, surrounded by high walls, reminding
 one of those medieval castles at Montecassino, in Perugia, Civita-
 vecchia and in other parts of the Italian peninsula. From a bullock

cart a simple angel-virgin-girl got down with her brother. Her saree was torn and marks of poverty were stamped on her face, on her dress, in her gaits. Fatima, I want to tell you, she looked at me and I looked at her. She fixed her gaze and sighed, which meant a world of thoughts, emotions and feelings to me.

Fatima : Yes, specially for a poetic and imaginative mind like yours. Sorry for the interruption, go on ; I do not feel jealous of that girl. Did the two hearts exchange any message in silence ?

Bharat : I like your humour, Fatima. You know a humorous person is always happy. In many cases it is the sign of divine wisdom. Where there is no wit, mind remains dwarfed, intellect fossilised, heart sterilised, and men and women become unproductive, unimaginative, uncreative. But when...

Fatima : But when...Now do not digress. Go ahead with the celestial nymph, your girl.

Bharat : Not a word she spoke ; not a word I spoke ; but I was a world to her ; her silent sigh was a world of ideas to me. There was natural love and simplicity in her, which you fail to find in those snobbish dolls dressed up in the rich halls and palatial buildings of the zamindars and Indian princes. In fact, I met in the streets and lanes of Indian towns ordinary women, so noble, simple and natural, who, if rightly mobilised and canalised, can be made the biggest assets of the nation. Whereas those women, shaded under rich palanquins or gilded roofs of our *Maharajas*, the wives and concubines of our rich pseudo-prophets, heads of *asat sanghas*, are nothing but a burden to the earth, and the mind-clouding spectres to the Venus-hunters, these simple, natural and modest Indian womenfolk form the incalculable riches of our nation, a big asset to the country, our beauty, our pride.

Fatima : Don't start philosophizing and generalising. Tell me what happened to that girl.

Bharat : After two minutes she went her way and I mine. That's all what happened. But her look and the meaning of her simplicity and virginal candour are there for ever enshrined in my heart, giving ever renewed life and inspiration to me. Unlike in the West, women are still women in the East.

So, I'll sing to you, Mother India, whose image I saw in those smiling girls up in the Kashmir Hills, in the Punjab plains, in the U. P., C. P., Bihar, Bengal and Orissa. Many angels held me enthralled in their thrilling looks ; many sarees loved to hold

me in their lap ; but I reciprocated their love from a distance, without physical touch or mental pollution. Yet the nectar of embrace and love too I know, drinking deep from the wells of perennial love. Indian girls taught me gentle and modest love ; they taught me patience, forbearance and majesty. So to India I am wedded for all my life and eternity, this *Hindusthan Hamara*, to whom I owe my body, soul and all.

A modern Indian youth gets entrapped within the glamorous West, dazzled by the scientific lustre their eyes remain ; they attempt in vain to synthesise East and West as long as the abyssal depths of the Eternal man, revealed more in the East than in the West, they do not fathom. Be true to your country, young man, which from ancient times, even before the stupas were raised in Taxilla, even before the Vedic seers sang their songs of *philosophia perennis* and *sanatana dharma*, down to our days remains the repository and reservoir of the Universal Humanity, the Eternal Man, the Catholic Mind.

Go and visit the Gupta Temple and the Peacock Gateways in Sanchi, and tell me whether the Parthenon in Athens, or the Capitol or Forum Romanum could excel our ancient wisdom. Think not, my young Truth-seeker of Hindustan, that narrow nationalism has blinded my vision. No, not so. In my younger days I was also a Socialist fighter and preached the Marx-Engels gospel. Then Communist Manifesto of the year 1948 was my St. John's Gospel, the document that supplanted my Bhagavad Gita and Dharmapada. Like S. Radhakrishnan, I too have wandered through East and West lecturing and preaching, until the hour dawned when I saw Reality. You know, my friend, there's no more need to speak too much, to read, to discuss or debate too much after becoming one with Self. Now I consider prophetic vocation to be the highest call which God in His mercy bestows upon a mortal man underneath the skies, which is not the denial, but fulfilment of politics and scholarship. Integrated persons we need today, men well-balanced, scales weighing more to the Inner Kingdom within, because subjective consciousness is the source of life, of political adjustments and economic developments of nations. Without that firm hold on the Knowledge of Truth everything fails. *Nisi Dominus frustra*, without Self-realisation everything is bunk, a big zero without circumference.

I stare at you with sparkling love, my young boy, my dear girl, for India needs young hearts like you, minds still fresh, receptive and pliable, not clogged through the mire of sensuality, nor inactive and despondent hearts, procrastinating, calculating. Sons and daughters from Hindustan must now arise, for the national soul of our people is at stake, if the blessings of western Science and Industry are allowed to choke, or render cheap, our immortal past. Let not atom bombs destroy the Cave-Temples of Ellora, the frescoes of Ajanta, the treasures of Saruath, of that sacred city of Benares. Make Immortal India reign *invicta*! And you, my young friend, concentrate your mind to your life-mission, renounce little joys and feeble consolations so that to great things your heart and mind may be set with undivided attention. You, Bharat, my son, be the servant of this *Bharatavarsha*, this ancient *Aryavarta*, about which Megastenes and Plutarch, Herodotus, Hinen Tsang and others wrote chronicles of immortal fame.

Remember, all the ancient lands, Babylonia and Phoenicia, Crete and Egypt, Palestine and Rome, Carthage and Athens, have all been swept away or submerged and transformed into age-streams. But mighty China and immortal India remain invincible, *invicta*. Hold your ground, be a strict businessman in the evangelical sense. Exchange not, deny not, sell not, India's heritage to cheap science, positivistic philosophy, American sky-scrappers and atomic power.

This in your mind and heart I want to impress, ere I part, that unconquerable India should be buttressed from every side, lest, in this struggle for existence, India lose her soul, get lost in the flood of thoughtlessness and power-politics. In no other country on earth, I want to assure you, O child of Immortal Bliss, *amritasya putrah*, there blossoms the flower of Self-realised religion, highest idealistic philosophy of life, fullest freedom and democracy, as in this ancient land of yours and mine, this *Hindustan hamara*.

If the soul of India asserted itself and remained unconquered when powerful Sikandar, before whom trembled the seven seas, invaded our land, when Pathans, Huns and Mughals ravished, deflowered and polluted this sacred land; when western powers in inroads come and subjugated this God's rose-garden, she survived, because of her imperishable legacy, still treasured, still kept intact; but now in grave danger to be turned upside down. Death sentence is passed on unto him who denies his Soul. Tremble then, my friend,

before Americanizing this land, sacred to gods and men, this pilgrimage-sanctuary for thinkers and sages under all climes. India is the Buddha-Gaya of saints and seers, Jerusalem-Mecca, combined.

Save, my Bharat, save your precious time and youth ; dance not to the tunes of snobbish dandism which lure and intoxicate shallower brains. Fall not into social traps, nor get entangled in academic snobbery and soul-denying etiquettes, but grow, my son, expand according to your genius unto Infinity.

More time I will not spend. I have my pilgrimage to finish, but this I want to leave with you as an eternal relic : swerve not, my dear, from the wisdom of the East and the West, that Gospel of the Universal Man, the specific message of India, the land of our adoration and love, where Muses sing, where Sophia smiles. My son, I love you. Reflect upon the words I said, and, if acceptable you find them, then accept, then embrace, the ideal behind this song I sing unto you this afternoon, in this Lahore, where lo, the son of Rama once reigned, in this Delhi, this ancient Indraprasta, this capital city of our Mother India.

Then Bharat, turning towards Fatima, said.

Now, come along, tell me more about your exploits. These waving hills of Rajmahal, that blue sky up above are bearing witness to what we are saying. It may be that some young, pure, idealistic heart, still in his or her teens or twenties, may hear our words and take to heart again. We, like millions before and after us, will be gone, marching towards the Impersonal Absolute. But the veil of personality in those who still trudge along the vale of life should be removed giving them the bread of life. So let's sing our song, let's dance with the music of creation, I mean literally the music of creation, before the sun is set in the West and darkness spread over us, when none can work. So, my dear, Fatima, I lean on this tree to hear your music, your exploits, your adventures, during the pilgrimage through the plains and hills, the cities and villages of this adored land of ours, this Hindustan *tera*, this Hindustan *mera*, this Hindustan *hamara*.

Fatima : Passing underneath the archway of Bijapur walls,
 Not far off where the hills of Deccan plateau rise,
 There where once Aurangzeb's soldiers raped virgin girls
 Who burned themselves as those Rajput women did
 When their brave virgins fell as menfolk went to meet death

While they they
 They perished freely in flames, as Akbar's forces drove
 towards the Chitor Fort.

There a boy sat with his flute in his lips with a garland around his neck, sitting in Krishna posture. The cuckoo bird from a tall mango tree cried : "Ku-u ; Ku-u", as I marched forward answering Krishna Kanayya's call. Then *Sribhagavan uvacha*,* as Krishna to Arjuna in Kurushetra : 'Indian Catholicism is Freedom ; Roman Catholicism is Authority' ; Jivanamukti is then attained when all the fetters of heart are torn asunder, enabling you to look proudly on God's creation. Remember that Indian genius is the freest in the world ; it grows beyond, not within, bounds, as organised religions do. To this catholicity be true, become calm which no gale can disturb. Indian society is held together by subtler forces than the ecclesiastical laws or the Coranic codes. It's union of the spirit ; it's fusion of hearts. To thy own Nation be true, to its spiritual heritage. For the machine man and positivism are the same ; but India is rooted in the philosophy of consciousness. India will live as long as that vedantic Idealism survives ; she will die when that invisible link with the Infinite is lost.

Bharat ; Yes ; Fatima, how grand is this country of ours ! But mind you, to each one his or her own country is always the best. But the divine song that springs from a truly patriotic heart can be heard only when one understands the glorious historical past of a country. You know in Hungary, Rumania and Poland, even the simple villagers stand enthralled at the music of their sky-birds faithfully reproduced by their violinists and singers. I feel those few who adopt a foreign country as their own miss very much indeed. But perhaps men like Max Müller, Annie Besant and Emily Kinnard who adopted India, poets like Byron and Shelly who wooed Italy, may be exceptions. You, my dear, have pulsed the heart of India, although the sister of Qaid-e-Azam Jinnah is a very different Fatima. She is a communalist, you are a Communist ; she is a Moslem Leaguer, you are an Indian nationalist ; she is after the power of arms, you are after the power of thought, values and spirit. What a heaven-wide gulf between this Fatima (pointing towards her) and that one, now the Chief Secretary to the Viceroy of Pakistan ! Mr. Jinnah is dead ; but the sin of Pakistan lives.

* Bagavad Gita 11, 10.

Fatima : Leave this political arena alone. They will make your brains boil and heart ache. As Virgil said : *paulo majora canamus**—Let's sing higher things.

Bharat : You witch ! your grace and charm take me back to the heavenly abode of dreams, sweet hopes and untarnished bliss.

On sweet hopes we spend our mortal days, in understanding Truth and Love whose radiance makes this vast creation sing and dance in bliss. From the first dawn of reflected consciousness this never-ending song have I heard in my heart that says : "To Indian soul that's in you be wholeheartedly true". Hence the virgin beauty of India's green hills and plains, the charm and grace of Indian womanhood everywhere with the flowing sarees, *sindoor* and dishevelled hair, her smiling lips, beaming eyes and rippling face, I adore, but from a distance, lest contact pollute the inner Infinity. But Reality, Sat-chit-ananda, became part and parcel of my life. I see, understand, realize, Him from near, from within. India's gifts in poetry, art, philosophy and thought-power, which, when fully realised, can beat atom bombs and robot planes. Something within me says : "Write, speak, live God's Love and Truth"-Hence I gave up amusements, dancing parties and entertainments, useless social gatherings and an idle and monied life, so that the gift of life and mind I received from Mother Nature I may give back to my Giver a hundredfold enriched. This life is a gambling, a game, business, where talents are to be returned to God with compound interest. But if one sleeps, grows despondent or dejected, or lives in a fool's paradise, hunting after girls and money, his precious youth is lost, lost for ever ; he's dead. These eternal verities have been glimpsed at by bards, poets, like Keats, Yeats, Shelley, Rabindranath and Gabriele D'Annuncio ; but in India alone realisation becomes the touchstone of genuine poetry, of living philosophy, not merely pleasing literary variety. Shelley's first wife despaired, committed suicide in body, the second girl committed suicide in spirit ; for young Shelly failed to find that equilibrium and integration he sought in Nature's naked Beauty, woman. But in India, integration, poise, equilibrium, harmony, form the very core of poetic inspiration, of philosophic genius. Poetry, philosophy and religion are to us realised Truth, profoundest Humanity. This is Self-realisation, vital, living, religious truth. As love, hopes and needs of man spring and meet from something

* Eclogue, IV.

impounderable, yet real fact, which they call love, so the individual and the Universal Reality commune and become one, where all doubts are removed and frailty is won, when the individual gains a purpose to live on earth, a living faith to guide him on, until the end of this mortal strife, this pilgrimage of Man on earth.

In this great ancient country of ours, this Hindustan hamara, the air, sky, earth, breeze, clime, men and women, birds, nature, rivers, temples, lore and scriptures, all are best conducive for developing the inner spirit. Inspired by this breeze did Nana Sahib and Rani Lakshmi Bhai fought the first War of Indian Independence against the pirates, bandits and vandals who subdued and emasculated this land of ours. Thousands of years ago did Chandragupta Mayura breathe this "Indianism", this specific inalienable heritage of ours, which will continue to thrive thousands of years after Gaudhis, Tagores, Ram Mohans, Ramkrishnans, Vivekanandas and Aurobindos, Vidyasagars, Bakin Chandras and a hundred modern names are gone. Spirit and soul of India can still produce thousands of Valmikies and Kalidasas and Chanakyas, Vasistas, Manus, Naradas, Patanjalis and Badharayanas. This country I will serve, this home of Universal Humanity, without the least thought of recognition or cost, without the taint of hope of State remuneration or popular applause. Silently I will serve her, whose degradation, filth and miseries with my own hands I will strive to remove and make her the adored bride of the Celestial Lover, the Creator of Truth, Beauty and Bliss, God, Sat-chit-ananda.

Fatima : Yes, Bharat, the squalor and languor everywhere should arouse righteous indignation in every seer, every son, every daughter, of this holy land. We need intelligent, idealistic and pure band of thinkers, workers and fighters from every side to undertake and fulfil India's nation-building task. In towns and villages I met young boys and girls, not in hundreds but in hundreds of thousands, whose life-line, mental capacities and resources are wasted for lack of State initiative and enterprise. Intellectual and moral qualities of our people are grand, second to none on earth. Our people can well understand both East and West and synthesize both in one whole, in the gospel of Universal Humanity, through her ancient soul. Boys and girls in their teens and twenties are sitting idle with none to guide, none to instruct, none to canalize the immense potentialities of our Youth. Of them too did

Grey include in these mournful numbers : "Chill penury repressed their noble rage and froze the genial current of their soul".* O Hercules, emancipate this Prometheus, our Indian Youth, the beloved of Minerva, of ethereal Saraswati, now alas nailed to penury, ignorance and woe. Let every Indian be a Bhaghirata to bring down the Ganges of grace, of thought-power and poetic rapture to rain upon this Garden of Eden ; this adored *Hindustan hamara*. O Telemones and Caryatides, who bore the burden of subject India, now rest a while, for the dawn of National Government brings that beacon light and cheer of life which you so badly needed. Anthropicocentric is going to be our religious God. Theocentric is going to be the Man of our secular State, for the individual "I" and individualized "Thou" should be integrated in an ideal society. No idealism there is without Truth, Love and Beauty, which, when realised by religious man, is called "God", by a philosopher is called "Thought-consciousness" ; "State" by a statesman, "Capital and Labour" by an economist. O Jupiter, Father of men and gods, give your ambrosial keys that will open to India's youth God-like immortality, and through our disciplined and untiring efforts, with a mighty will, never daunted by faults and failures, make us all forge ahead towards the brave new world.

Bharat : Brahma, Vishnu, Siva, Durga, Kali, Parvati, Tara,
Madonna, Joan of Arc, Saraswati ;

Gods and goddess of Indian mythology, awake, arise
And join hands with those creative, sublime myths
Of ancient Greece, Rome, Babylon, Foenicia and Crete.
In this machine civilization, where individual is lost
In the grinding wheels of a totalitarian State,
Of Big Business, where dreams and poetry fade away,
Let it be given us to fight for the divine might
That from divine philosophy and Pluto's flute come.
Ancient classics should be revived ; Humanism,
naturalism, mysticism and spirit re-enthroned,
That black magic, priesthood and machine-glamour
Be defeated, routed from the Divine in human hearts.

Fatima : O you are right, Bharat. I discovered so much snobbery, dull academic-mindedness among many of our so-called educated people in the country. The new National Government,

* Thomas Grey's Elegy.

still to be born I hope, will sort out the right creative minds to hold the helm of Education, whose primary concern will be formation of character, independent, creative and enterprizing spirit more than mere bookish erudition and dead titles and degrees heaped over one's shoulders from the University halls. Scientific and technical education in the Indian Universities, without or before creating the right Indian and national environment, may turn out thousands of walking wireless sets, calculating machines and machine cogs and wheels, neither Eastern nor Western, but the disintegrated specimens from both the East and West. But there is neither East nor West but only one flower-garden of God is this vast universe, where all continents, races and creeds are made one.

Then Bharat sang :

INDIA, ASIA, AND THE WORLD

Judaism, Christianity, Islam, all but rays of the Oriental Sun,
 To the Indo-Aryan genius consider not as antagonistic, my son,
 For, those Semitic religions, based on a living faith, are
 Surest roads to life for mortals groping in this relative existence.
 Did not Omar Khayyam, that super-Voltaire of the Orient,
 The scientist, astronomer, epigrammist and mystic poet,
 That martyr for free thought, living faith and poetic love ;
 And Hafiz, Rumi, Rabbia and those few in the Islamic world,
 Disprove them who found but a blind bigotry in their fold ?
 Christianity gave a Paul and John, Origin and Augustine,
 Jerome and Scotus Erigena, Albert the Great and Aquinas,
 Not to mention the myriads who, fighting against the Church,
 Sought and found wisdom and freedom in Jesus' gospel.
 Moses, David, Solomon, Isaias, Zacharias, a Jeremias, Judith,
 Amos and, above all, the divine Jesus, Prophet-God of Nazareth,
 Are the gifts of Israel to enrich Humanity's treasure-house.
 Let not that accursed day come when the Oriental soul
 Will become a prostitute to American Dollar or machinery,
 When that divine simplicity and colourful variety, lyrics
 Of the Asiatic life, of India's life, be substituted, commuted
 With American jazz music or big-business mechanism.
 O I am an Asiatic, and Asiatic I mean to live and die.
 Ye damsels in Bagdad, ye young Singalee girls, nymphs,

Who take your earthenware pitchers to the deep wells
 To draw water with your melodious songs and charms,
 Mean more, infinitely more, to me than their atom bombs
 and gilded tombs
 Of the West. My India, my Orient, lose not thy soul.
 Living religious faith in a living God of human hearts,
 That all-sided thrill of life and romanticism in strife
 Spring from the Orient, there where God's sun rises.
 Let Churchills and Trumans fight for Western civilization ;
 Ye young nations of the East, my India, China, Japan,
 Burma, Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, Syria, Palestine,
 Arabia, Mongolia, Machuria, Philipines, Indonesia,
 And you mighty Russia of the Asiatic continent,
 Come ye all, young Nations of the East, come, unite,
 Defend and vindicate values against the machine of the West.
 They have held you captives, suck your blood and money,
 Killed your sons and raped your beautiful daughters ;
 Now the hour of resurrection of the Orient dawns.
 Come, awake, arise, my Asia, ye nations, great and small of the
 East.

O Tibetan belles with your beads and garlands around,
 Your rich oriental costumes and fascinating head-dress,
 Ear-rings and anklets. O my divine Asia awake, arise.
 Out of million paths which mortal men tread on earth
 I have chosen mine, at last, the path of love and truth,
 Of oriental wisdom concentrated in the Aryan and Semitic lore.
 My heart leaps with the joy of the Lord of this Universe ;
 With His love I am intoxicated, with His oriental charms,
 In this ancient East will I continue to live, work and die
 To bring mankind nearer, closer, dearer to one another,
 And wedded and cemented in the Universal Humanity, this
 Divine Mother of nations all.

This life is an incessant, inter-linked, vital experiences,
 On whose depths and warmth are raised those immortal epics,
 Like the Iliad and Odyssey of Homer, the Aeneid of Virgil,
 Divine Comedy of Dante, Paradise Lost of Milton, Ariosto's
 Orlando Furioso, Panini's Grammer, Tulsidas' Ramayan,
 And all those verses which still enthrall thinking world.
 The pangs of Romeo and Juliet have more philosophy, lessons

Than the dead, arid, desert sands of academic scholastics
 Whether of the Medieval Schoolmen or modern snobbish dandies
 In the University halls, who fail to sense subtle life-vibrations.
 Mahru, Omar Khayyam's temptress and later disciple
 Uttered sublime philosophy when touched by sufferings,
 With glimpses into Truth, after experiencing God-Love-Life.
 I love Omar Bin Ibrahim Al Khayyami, the tent-maker-musician
 Of lofty numbers, of quatrains which East alone can produce.
 Islamic Culture too is India's pearl by birthright,
 Where Persian and Urdu scholars and Sanskrit pundits,
 Christian theologians, Parsee-Sikh and Kashmir Shaiva

Siddantists

Should form but one single family, the India of our dreams,
 The unified and united India of cultures and races divers.
 Let this India become one, let the two-nation theory cease,
 Let Pakistan return to the lap of maimed Mother Indiastan,
 The grand unity that transcends Hindustan and Pakistan,
 Sikhistan, Christianstan and all "stans" of communal brand.
 But experience it, my brother, sister, feel it, realize it,
 In your life, in the deepest layers of the consciousness
 Of your heart, mind and soul ; for Unity is life.
 Children, family, wife, husband, war and peace,
 Politics, economics, diplomacy, journalism, love-romance,
 Capital and Labour, joys and sorrows, all, my friend,
 If real, are based on deep experience, which like a breeze,
 Or some storm of gentle ecstacy, pass through your body,
 Bestowing on you profound vision and realization from within.
 Yes, Hindustan is one ; this fertile, versatile land sublime,
 This India is but one family ; our land is our home divine.
 Provinces and districts, religions and races discard,
 My friend, if the catholic soul of India you want to discover.
 Extend your love more and Asia you will find is one,
 Whose but a vermiform appendix is the European continent.
 I have no family but the grand family of my India dear ;
 No private girl or girls to court with but Indian womanhood,
 Her ideal grace and love. A servant of Hindustan I've become.
 God and Hindustan are all that I see every moment of my life,
 Whose sinews and mirage I see and experience everywhere.
 This banner of Asiatic spirit we need uphold with heads erect

Against American Dollar and Indian Machine, with hearts stout
 The two fiends, which through charm or threat,
 If asleep we become, will devour India's, Asia's, immortal soul.
 So, be up ; sons and daughters of Hindustan, of Asia great ;
 Lit this God's lighthouse and keep it. By my Indian birth
 An heir I am to all forms of civilizations of East and West,
 To all cultures and philosophies, flourished underneath the sun,
 For India is one, Asia is one, this world of ours is one.
 For India is our home : Asia is our home : This world is our
 home, this cosmos, this God.

PLATONIC LOVE CROWNED

Bharat sang this song and then and there followed the scene of their separation. Their love matured into fruitful service and redemptive thought vibrations. Platonic Love, the love between persons of the same or opposite sex for the realisation of God, is the same as *sakti sadhana* in Indian religious-philosophy. The contact and experiences of the one with the other, unlike in the ordinary millions all over the world, helped Bharat and Fatima to reach God, develop pure Consciousness and spiritual regeneration. The goal of their friendship was reached. The fruits became ripe and they fell of their own accord to the lap of Mother Nature, drawn by the law of gravitation. What is gravitation in the physical world that is love in the spiritual world. God is Love. The paths leading to Him are many of which the most important are knowledge, *Jnana* of the yogis, which is also the *gnosis* of the Greeks, Bhakti or devotion, karma or God-conscious dynamics and *Sakti sadhana* or victory over sex through sex itself. Sex is the beginning, middle and end of the life of the first-borns ; Self or God is the alpha and omega of the twice-borns. Bharat and Fatima, through the grace of God and their honest, pure, strenuous efforts had reached the summits of the spiritual Himalayas. Their ascent of the Mount Carmel was crowned with success. Henceforth both of them, the young son and daughter of India, will have nothing, none, save God as their food, inspiration love and motive force of service of India and Mankind.

Bharat then turned to Fatima and said :

Out of the death of sex there shines the luminous Self,
For you and for me there is none more left in this world

to serve save God in men,

To adore Man in god. Fatima and Bharat are now dead, buried.
If they still live, they live as vehicles of grace divine,
Channels of divine love, lamps to lit the sex-bound darkness,
God's eyes to the blind, His legs to the lame everywhere.
You are no longer Fatima to me, but Goddess Saraswati,
Feminine embodiment of Divine Wisdom ; go back, go,
Go back to your heavenly abode as Sita pure of old.
We now part, never more to meet under God's star-lit skies,
But there where Love reigns supreme and Life never dies.

So saying Bharat rose and kissed good-bye to Fatima. Purusha was eternally emancipated from *prakriti* and *prakriti* was freed from the chains of *purusha*. Both become free in spirit ; they have gone beyond the world of *namarupā*, name and forms. They then reached the final stage of *viragya*, dispassion, detached service, going beyond Hindu or Muslim, Indian or Arabic, Easterner or Westerner. They become one with the One who is without a second. Hereafter both of them had no more mission in life but to serve Humanity in India, India in Humanity, man in God, god in Man. They become twice-born and set on foot to help their countrymen and countrywomen to be born anew in Spirit and Truth. For unless we are born anew we shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. Here Bharat and Fatima bade farewell, each leading the life of the messengers of God, homeless wanderers, healers, redeemers of humans suffering. They worked silently as God Himself does. *Brahman* the Absolute is silence ; but *Brahma*, the relative, is cosmos and *samsara*. Not in the political tangles, not in rhetorical verbiage, not for fame or name, not for sex or money, but for pure love of God and Humanity they started. They travelled hills and plains, from village to village, as Jesus of Nazareth of old or Gandhiji in Noakhali in our own days. They never more met in this life, nor they needed nor desired it any longer. They became channels of divine grace, servants of God, His pen and tongue, His hands and feet, His brains and hearts. These two young hearts, Bharat and Fatima, symbolise the eternal Ideal Indian youth should pursue, for India must blossom

anew to her specific mission and her *sanatnana dharma* or eternal religion. It is neither the technical Hindu, Islam or Christian or Parsee labels that are to be preserved, but the spirit and heart, humanity and divinity of India, this land of our birth and love, the Mother whom we worship and adore.

India's eternal mission is and will continue to be spiritual humanism, humanistic spiritualism. India taught that Reality is Consciousness pure. God is Consciousness ; man in his essence is Consciousness, the Real. The specific mission of India will be spiritual regeneration of mankind, not in opposition with, but with the help and cooperation of, the various mighty spiritual forces of the world, specially of the Greco-Roman world which still continues to be the vital force in western civilisation. In the new set up of things, when a new heaven and earth will be born in India, the old pundits and stereotyped orthodoxy will go. From India will come the new spiritual Communism, which, in conjunction with the Dialectic Materialism of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, will continue to be the hope of the world. In this new set up, in new and young India, the present lethargy, apathy and indifferentism, resulting from the economic anachronism, soul-denying materialism and greed, will go and Indian youth will be inspired with a new faith in their country's unique and great mission.

The answer to our problems is evidently men and women who become answer themselves in flesh and blood. Living ideal, embodiments of inner purity, living faith, undying hope and unbeatable optimism, will continue to be the backbone of Indian Nation in-making. Every son of India will then be a Bharat ; every daughter a Fatima. As the old Vedic religion gave place to Brahmanism, Brahmanism to Buddhism, Buddhism to modern Hinduism and Hinduism to the various scatter-brain and fissiparous forces of the present-day Indian religious melting pot, but the tap-root of Indian civilisation remains, so Islam, Christianity, caste-Hinduism, Parsism or any other ism that are in India can survive only in so far as they are rooted on to the Indian tap-root which is Vedanta, the Upanishads. If the present caste-ridden, Brahmin-dominated, ritual-intoxicated Hinduism does not change by the cosmic law of evolution, then violent revolution, the sort of which is anticipated by the International Communist Forces, whose typhoons are felt even in India, will do the job. Our women-folk must be emancipated from the bondage of Muslim purdha and

Hindu veil. Christianity will regain its oriental lustre and vital creativity in the Vedantic soil of India. All forms of bondage, hypocrisy, superstitious obscurantism, should be swept away, through sweet reasonableness and gentle persuasion, if possible, but through violent revolution or enforced legislation, if necessary.

Let India's Love that is her soul, whose latest Buddha-like embodiment was Mahatma Gandhi, shine resplendent anew. Let lust be displaced by the enthroning of Pure Love in its stead. Pure love is God. Pure Love serving all races and peoples is *daya* or compassion. India is Philosophy-Religion ; India is Religion-Philosophy. As long as this soul is adheared to, the revolutionary socio-economic changes the gospel of Spiritual Communism envisages, can only make India march forward, right into the vanguard of the peaceful, progressing and creative nations of the world. There is neither East nor West, but only one great Human family, Humanity, to be served and adored. We are conscious of our responsibilities towards Indian and human civilisation, and that is the pathway for us to follow, the polar star to pursue, the mission to be fulfilled, in this world of ours, this India of ours, this HINDUSTAN HAMARA.

PRAYER

Our Father who art in heaven, Mother giving birth to this Universe, Impersonal *Brahman*, Reality Supreme beyond all names and forms, Personating in Brahma, God, deus, Alla, Tao, Theos, Khuda, Iswar, Incarnating in Buddha, Jesus, Krishna, Ram, Kabir, and Tukaram, Buddha as cosmic consciousness, Jesus as central historic affirmation, In Madonna, Saraswati, Durgha, Tara as Mother of Love and grace. God, Consciousness Pure, grant thy grace for us to move forward ! Clense us of our sins of flesh and blood, of sex, lust and greed, Redeem us in thy Holy Spirit Divine, making us pure, noble, brave. Thou by whose grace alone are the seductions of flesh won, With whose courting alone are life's meaning, poise, power gained. Thou, Reality Supreme, Substance behind shadow, Permanance Real, Immovable Mover of all, Source, Sustainer, Harbour of peace for all, Thou, Universal Virgin, on whose lap enter all lovers of Beauty, On whose breast are nurtured all twice-borns of this earth, Thou, Magician Supreme, Beloved of human hearts, come, redeem ! Give us this day our daily bread, lead us not into sins, temptations,

Thrice blessed be thy holy name, hallowed by virgin-saints,
 By prophets, martyrs, by the virtuous and the heroic, by thy lovers,
 By artistis, poets, philosophers, bards of all races, contries, climes.
 Thou Centre and Cimcumference of the Communist International,
 Balance, Bridge, between Marx-Engls, Lenin-Stalin on the one side,
 Jesus, Buddhas, Muhammads, virgins, seers and saints on other side.
 Make this Mankind one with common Communistic economy of life,
 Matter of Marx wedded to the Spirit of Jesus, *prakriti* with *purusha*.
 For Socialism is thy Gospel for this Modern Age, Atomic, Divine
 Where Matter or Extension, Thought or Consciousness, become one,
 Wedded duely to Thy Heart, in the Sanctuary of Love Divine Pure.
 Not Asia alone, but let the whole world turn Communistic in life,
 More spiritual than Russia, thy first promised land on earth.
 Let many Lenins, Kemel Pascias, Mao Tse Tungs, rain down,
 Fall full-grown from thy star-lit heavens ; let them do their job.
 Let the Leftist politicals and the Communist vanguard save this land
 From the clutches of heartless Capitalists and fiendish hypocrites,
May thy workers in the world unite ! Unit in China, Japan, India,
 Burma, Malya, Europe, America, Russia, and bring down thy throne,
 Thy universal Kingdom on earth, the reign of peaceful brotherhood !
 Nothing but their chains have the proletariat to lose in this strife,
 But the hypocrites their stone-built temples, mosques and churches
 Where not Thee, the Lord of the Universe, they adore, but Mammon,
 Babel, their vested interests with priests' sprinkling of holy water.
 Make our hands clean, our hearts pure, chaste, unsullied, sincere,
 While facing our foes in thy battlefield, where not sword, but spirit,
 Not atom bombs on Nagasaki and Hieroshima, but Love flows
 On nations and races all, but with social justice firmly established.
 Teach us not birth-control but control of self and purity
 Father, Mother, Beloved, Sweetheart, Light, Life, All-in-All for us.
 Come, take us all, East and West, Hindus, Muslims, Christians all,
 All in thy fondling lap ; there redeem, there cleanse and save us all,
 Us of the East and the West, us Hindus, Buddhists, Christians,
 Muslims, all of this thy holy land, this India, this Asia, this Europe,
 this world, this God, this HINDUSTAN HAMARA.

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Sadhana—Self-realisation, God-consciousness and path leading to it.

Sadhu—A holy man, a wandering monk in India.

Saheb—A western boy or gentleman or the orientals imitating western dress language and customs.

Shari'at (*Persian*)—Law, legal religion.

Sakti—Power, feminine force as centre of creation and activity.

Sakti Sadhana—Self-realisation through sex-mastery.

Sanatana Dharma (*Sanskrit*)—Eternal Religion.

Saraswati—Indian goddess of wisdom and learning, Virgin-Mother of Beauty, Poetry Literature, Music and Fine Arts.

Saree Jahanse [accha Hindustan Hamara (*Hindustani*)—Nationalist hymn by Sir Mohammed Iqbal. “Of all the countries in the world the best is our Hindustan.....”

Saree—The national costume of Indian women, the most artistic dress expressive of the high degree of refinement and civilisation ; Indian women, her beauty, grace, modesty, chastity, virginity.

Sati—Practice of widows burning themselves alive with their husbands on the funeral pyre once practiced among Hindus.

Satyagraha (*Hindi*)—Holding firm to and abiding in truth.

Satyam-Janam-Anandam Brahma (*Sanskrit*)—Upanishadic, Brahman is Being-Knowledge-Bliss.

Sindoor—Vermilion on the forehead of married women in North India.

Samsara—Life-wheel that rolls from generation as a result of karma in Hindu, Buddhist and Jain traditions and in esoteric Greek religions.

So'ham (*Sanskrit*)—I am That, the Vedantic axiom.

Sub specie aeternitatis (*Latin*)—Seeing things and events in time under the mirage and shadow of aeternity.

Surya Dev Namascar (*Hindi*)—Greetings to the sun-god.

Swadesi (*Hindi*)—Home-made, specially the India-manufactured cloths and articles during the nationalist movement under Gandhiji's leadership.

Swaraj (*Hindi*)—Home Rule, political freedom.

Tatvamasi (*Sanskrit*)—Thou art that ; Upanishadic axiom connoting the identity of the human soul with the Supreme Reality.

Tena Tyaktena Bhunjita (*Sanskrit*)—Enjoy Him by renouncing, the opening verse in the Isopanishad.

Theos (*Greek*)—God, personal God.

Vairagya (*Sanskrit*)—Dispassion, - imperturbability, equanimity of mind and freedom from the bondage of senses.

Zindabad (*Urdu*)—Live, long live, like “Inquilab Zindabad” : long live the revolution !

